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# Studies in Islamic History

by

DR. AMIR HASAN SIDDIQI

*Dean, Faculty of Arts,  
University of Karachi*

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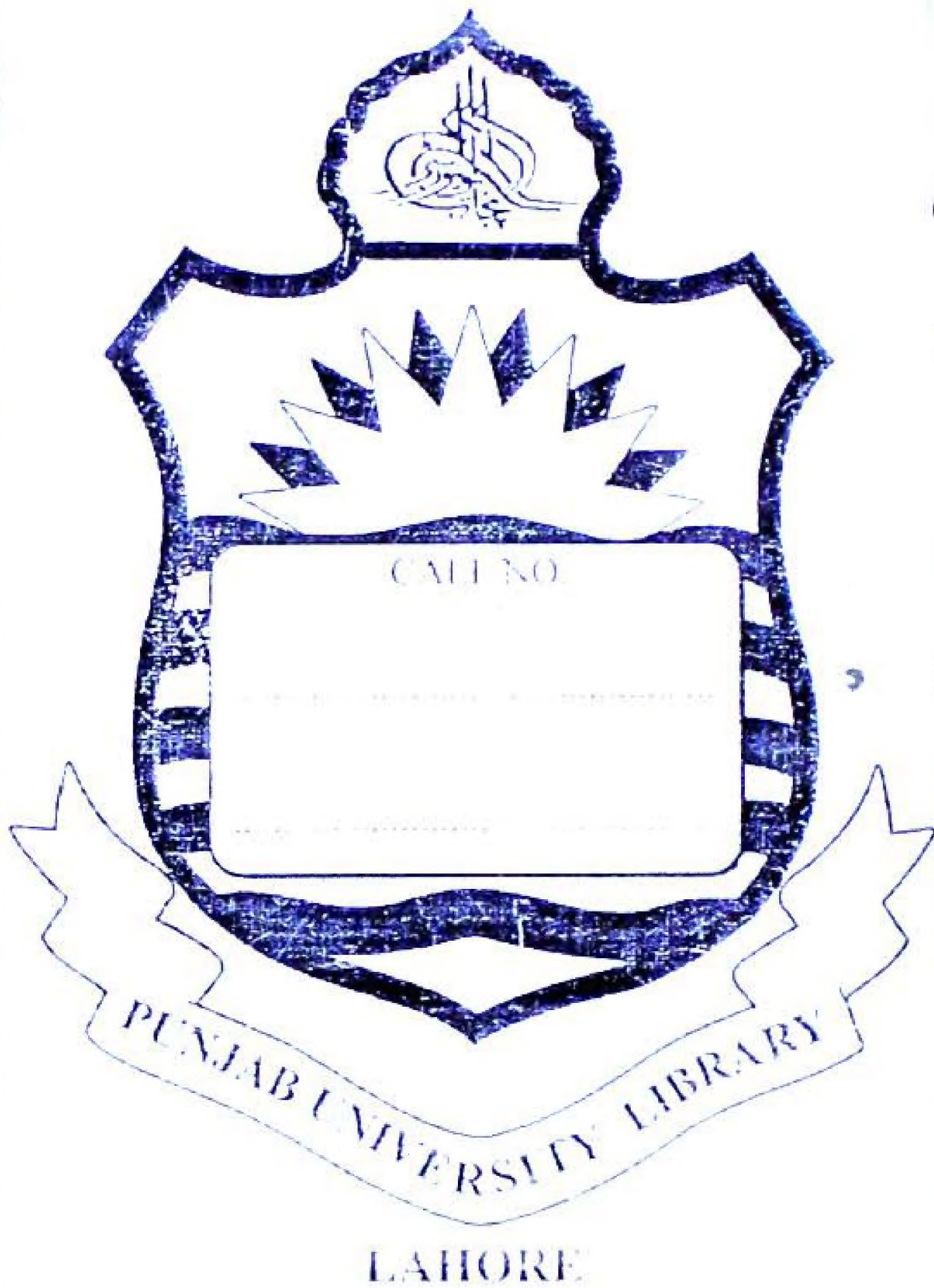
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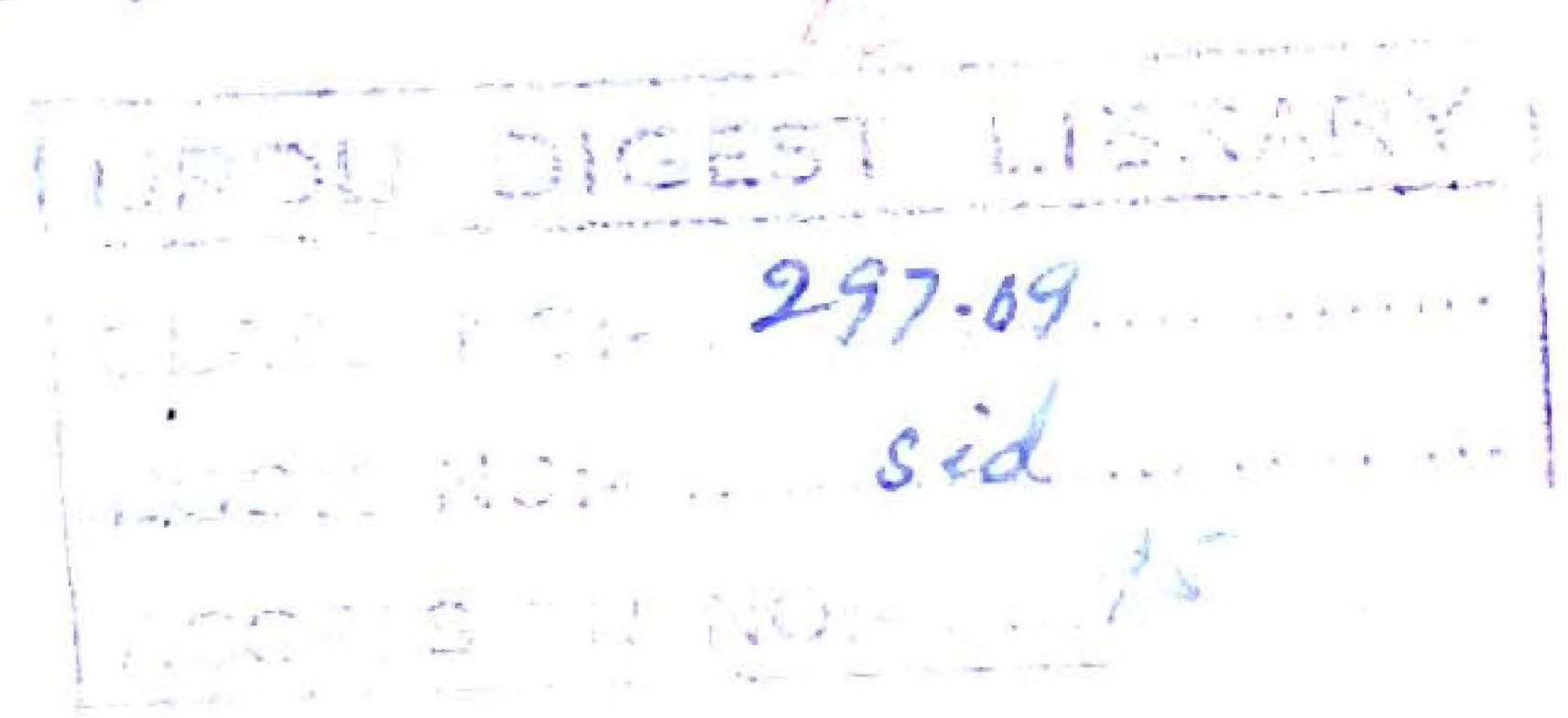
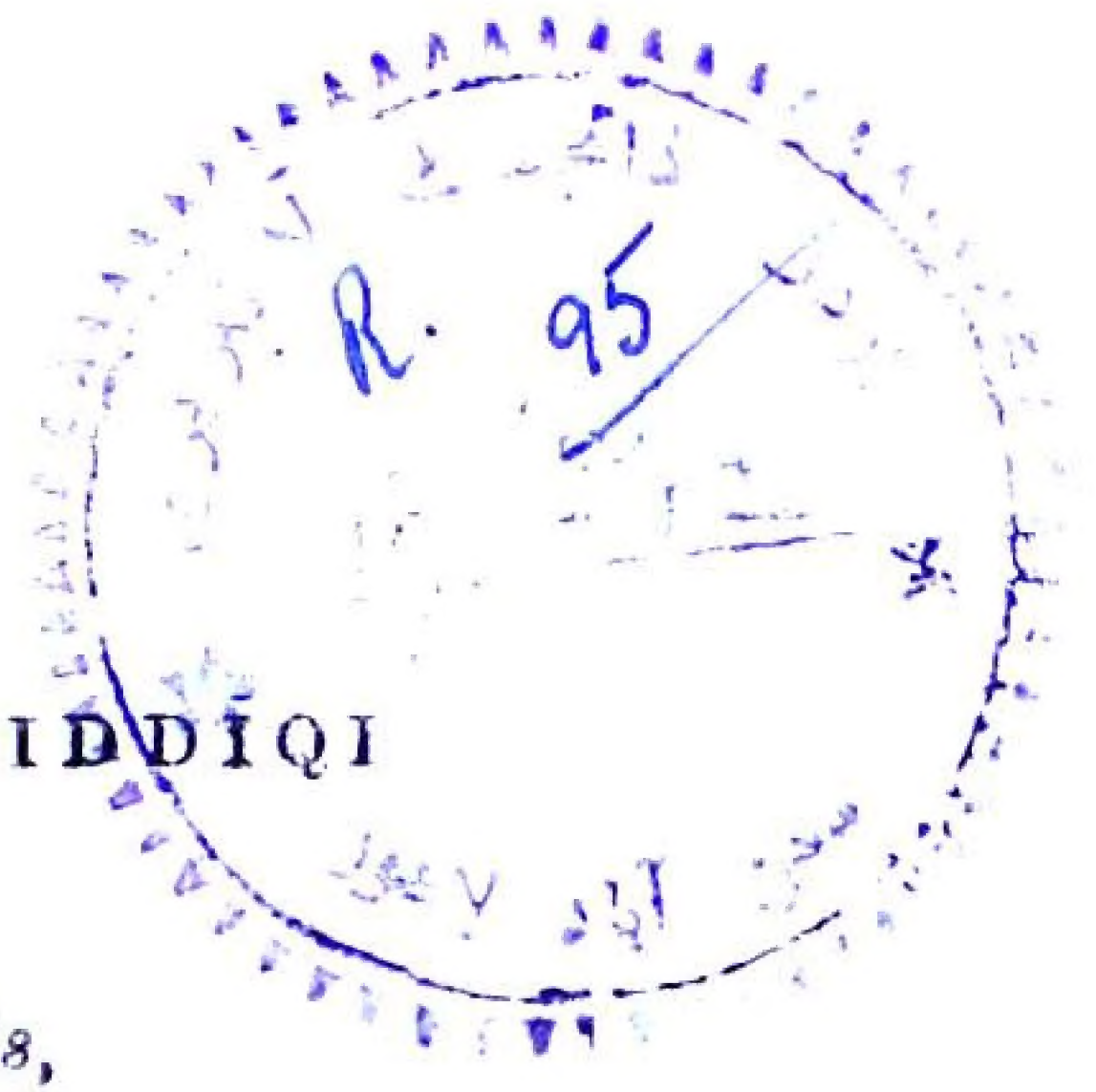
With the best  
wishes of the author  
to  
Dr. Hashimuddin Ahmad  
Allah bless him

# Studies in Islamic History

2.3.63

DR. AMIR HASAN SIDDIQI

*Dean, Faculty of Arts,  
University of Karachi*



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KARACHI





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DEDICATED

to

Mr. Habibur Rahman,

Minister of Education,  
Government of Pakistan,

as a token of my regard for him and in  
appreciation of his love for Islam.









## FOREWORD

This is a collection of lectures which Dr. Amir Hasan Siddiqi delivered at some of the Universities in Australia. It has been a pleasure to go through them. Dr. Siddiqi has been associated with the teaching of Islamic History at important centres of learning in Hind-Pakistan sub-continent. He has an attractive style. These lectures will be of interest to the student of Islamic History, as well as the general reader. So many aspects of the History of Islam have been treated here and the collection as a whole leaves a pleasant impression upon the mind. Only teachers of Dr. Amir Hasan's standing could have dealt with the subject so lucidly.

Mahmud Husain,  
Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Dacca.







## P R E F A C E

Early last year, I was selected by the Ministry of Education, Pakistan Government, to deliver a series of lectures at some of the Australian Universities in order to arouse their interest in the teaching of Islamic History which was being ignored there completely. The travel grant was provided by the Spalding Trust, Oxford, for this purpose. There were hardly three months at my disposal for the preparation of these lectures and the task became more onerous when I was not communicated even the topics on which I was required to deliver these lectures. It was but natural for me to choose subjects dealing with Islamic History and Muslim Social and Political Institutions keeping in mind that I was to address not a specialized group of scholars in Islamic History, but people who lack any but perhaps a most elementary knowledge of the subject. The lectures had, therefore, to be confined to questions of general interest. Some of my colleagues also came to my help in collecting some material dealing with the subjects of these lectures. I am particularly indebted to Mr. M. A. Rauf, Senior lecturer in Government College for Men, Karachi, Mr. Zafar Ishaq Ansari, now a lecturer in the Department of Islamic History, University of Karachi, Mr. Hasan Qasim Murad, a Fellow in the Department of Islamic History, University of Karachi, who provided valuable assistance in preparing these lectures. I am also thankful to my pupil Mr. M. W. Gazder who has gone through the proofs and has helped me a lot in the publication of this book.

The following subjects were chosen :

1. Islamic History at a Glance.
2. Contribution of Islam to Modern Civilization.
3. Intellectual Awakening during the Abbasid Caliphate.
4. Influences of Muslim Rule in India.
5. The Political System of Islam.



6. Economic System of Islam.
7. The Judicial System of Islam.
8. The Status of Non-Muslims in Islamic State.
9. The Position of Women in Islam.
10. Significance of Mosque in Islam.
11. Origin and Development of Islamic Culture.

To these papers has been added another explaining the Cultural and Political Background of Pakistan. It is a lecture delivered at the U. S. Embassy in connection with the Orientation Programme organised by that Embassy for its American staff.

These lectures were greatly appreciated in Australia and aroused considerable interest in the subject, so much so that all the three Universities are now seriously thinking of starting courses in Islamic History. (One of them, the Melbourne University has already made a beginning in this respect.) I, therefore, thought of getting these articles published in the form of a book.

I do not claim any originality for these articles which have been mostly collected from secondary sources. I have, however, given a new orientation: and in most of the cases, the interpretation of events is all my own. I have utilised material from Hitti's *The History of the Arabs* in the article "Intellectual Awakening during the Abbasid Caliphate." I have also drawn ample material from Dr. Hameedullah's book entitled *Introduction to Islam*. I have also gathered material from *Islamic Culture* by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthal and from various articles published in *al-Islam*, Karachi. With regard to the chapters dealing with Muslim Institutions, they are the result of my long association with the subject.

I hope that the publication of this collection of articles will not only be useful to the post-graduate students of Islamic History but also the general public.

Karachi,  
October 1960.

(Dr.) Amir Hassan Siddiqi.



**P R E F A C E**  
**TO THE**  
**SECOND EDITION.**

I am glad to present the second revised edition of the **Studies in Islamic History**. The response which the book received at the hands of intelligentsia in general and the teachers and the students in particular is very encouraging. I thank all those persons who have welcomed the book. I have tried to thoroughly revise the book for this second edition. Two new Chapters have been added on the 'Intellectual Attainments of the Muslims in Spain' and 'Slavery and Islam' respectively. Important improvements have been made in the rest of the book also. I hope these additions will add to the utility of the book.

I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Khurshid Ahmad, Editor, 'Voice of Islam', Dr. M. A. Khan, Lecturer in Islamic History, University of Karachi, for assisting me in revising the book and Mr. M. W. Gazder for going through the proofs. Dr. M. S. Jilani, Head of the Department of Sociology did the pains-taking job of making the index and my thanks are due to him for this labour of love.

1st December, 1962.

A. H. SIDDIQI







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# **THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT**

## **OF**

### **ISLAMIC CULTURE**

Culture literally means cultivation. In contemporary parlance, when used alone, it denotes the cultivation of the human mind. However, in its wider sense, the word 'culture' has come to acquire a variety of meanings. In common usage it is regarded as the equivalent of good manners and certain gentleness of disposition. It also stands for good taste, particularly in the field of art.

Without entering into the subtle distinctions between civilization and culture it will not be very wrong to conceive of culture as a complex whole affecting human ideals, actions and modes of living. Culture permeates the life of the individual as well as that of the society. One might as well say that culture includes on the one hand, the whole of man's material civilization and on the other, his entire spiritual civilization. In this sense, it not only includes food, clothes, houses, machines and means of communication and transport, but also religion, morality, law, philosophy, art, literature, and government.

Islamic culture means the cultivation of human mind in order to enable a Muslim to regulate the whole of his life in accordance with the divine law as incorporated in the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Islamic culture not only deals with the cultivation of the mind of the believers as individuals but also of the Muslim society as a whole. In fact it aims at nothing short of universal human brotherhood.

"By Islamic culture is meant not the culture attained at any given moment by the people who profess the religion of Islam irrespective of the consideration from which sources this culture was



derived, but the kind of culture prescribed by the Islamic religion of which human progress is the definite and avowed aim. The Quran promises success in this world and also in the hereafter to persons who act upon its guidance and obey its laws. It aims at nothing less than the success of mankind as a whole, and this success is to be attained by cultivation of man's gifts and faculties. If any development in Muslim society is not sanctioned by the Quran or some express injunction of the Prophet, it is un-Islamic and its origin must be sought outside the Islamic polity. Muslims are not expected to achieve any success from its adoption, though it need not necessarily militate against success. If any development is contrary to an express injunction of the Quran and against the teaching and example of the Prophet, then it is anti-Islamic ; it must militate against success, and Muslims simply court disaster by its adoption."

Islamic culture is so intricately bound up with religion, so deeply imbued with the idea of Allah's universal sovereignty, that it can not be treated without comprehending the teachings of Islam. In its grandeur and in its decadence, Islamic culture whether we survey it in the field of science, of art and literature, or of social welfare has everywhere and always this religious inference, this all-pervading ideal of universal and complete theocracy.

Islamic culture naturally originated in the beliefs, tenets and principles of that religion, but with the march of events, it continued assimilating all that was best and beneficial in other people's creeds and cultures and rejected the elements which militated against the Islamic sense of morality or were in conflict with the fundamentals of Islam.

In order to appreciate the profound influence of Islamic culture on the minds and the life of the Muslims, it is necessary to describe the fundamental beliefs and practices of Islam. To be a Muslim, one has got to have belief in the following five fundamentals :

- (1) Belief in the Unity of God ;
- (2) Belief in the Hereafter ;
- (3) Belief in all the previous Prophets and in Muhammad as the last Prophet ;



- (4) Belief in all the previous revealed books and in the Quran as the last of the heavenly-revealed books, and
- (5) Belief in the Angels as the ministers of God and His messengers to various Prophets.

These fundamentals of belief have got to be followed by five practices viz., (1) Establishment of Prayer ; (2) Zakat or charity ; (3) Fasting ; (4) Pilgrimage and (5) Jihad i.e., sacrifice in the way of and for the sake of God.

### **The Concept of Tawhid**

Nothing is more fundamental in the teachings of Islam than the concept of *Tawhid* i.e., the Unity of God. This means that God and God alone can be the object of man's submission and worship. By submitting to God and recognizing His sovereignty alone, humanity can free itself from submission to all other objects — kings, potentates, and gods of wealth and power and influence. Because of this concept, the Islamic culture, unlike other cultures does not recognize distinctions of race, colour and country. Culturally speaking, a community will be considered Islamic if it does not transgress the limits of Allah or violate the spirit of Islam.

Culturally Muslims form part of a single community, the *ummah* but there being only one God, both Muslims and non-Muslims are His creatures and as such have their rights.

The idea of equality can also be traced to the basic concept of *Tawhid*. In the social sphere the world of Islam has been and is refreshingly different from most other parts of the world and in the political sphere even Muslim autocrats accepted the supremacy of the divine law (*Shariah*) and the principle of equality before law. Which other civilization can present the example of a head of the State appearing in person before the judge as an ordinary accused?

Through the conception of *Tawhid*, a society is being brought into being where there will be equality before law, liberty of conscience, freedom of expression, social justice and toleration. In fact it is for the practical attainment of such an ideal society that Islam has enjoined the above mentioned five practices.



Now let us examine how Islamic Culture has been helping the Muslims in strengthening their belief in the Unity of God and the realization of that ideal society through those practices. Both the beliefs and practices are bound with each other and are practised by the Muslims simultaneously.

As soon as the child is born in a Muslim family: the formula declaring the greatness of God, and His Unity, and confirming the prophethood of Mhammad is instilled into his ears. This is the first baptism of a Muslim child. It is from here that Islamic culture begins and goes on penetrating into all the thoughts, beliefs and actions of the Muslims till their death.

The first ceremony which is called *Aqiqah*, i.e., removing the hair from the child's head takes place at a very early stage after its birth. On this occasion too the remembrance of Allah is repeated and generally two goats are sacrificed with a view to entertaining the guests, neighbours and the poor.

After sometime, the circumcision ceremony in the case of a boy takes place and the same performance is repeated i.e., the remembrance of Allah's sovereignty and the entertainment of friends, neighbours, relations and the poor.

When the child attains the age of four, he is put to school in order to learn reading and writing. On this occasion, he or she is asked to read in the name of Allah, i.e. acquire knowledge for purposes enjoined by God. This means acquisition of knowledge for the benefit of humanity and not to the detriment of human society. On this occasion too a feast is held to which relations, friends, and neighbours are invited and the poor are fed. The child is presented with a pen and a writing wooden plank, and other presents in cash and kind from his relatives.

After the age of puberty, every Muslim, man or woman is enjoined to get himself or herself married as this is regarded as one of the practices of their Prophet (peace be on him). Marriage takes place with the mutual consent of both the parties and the ceremony is short and simple. In the presence of the parents or their



advocates and the witnesses a divine performs the marriage ceremony, announcing the dower which the man has settled on her bride and also the mutual consent of both the parties. On this occasion, after glorifying God and mentioning the traditions of the Prophet, a Muslim (and he can be any Muslim as Islam has no priestcraft) delivers a short sermon, describing the duties, rights and obligations of both the parties as enjoined by the Islamic Law. After the consummation of marriage, a feast is held to which all the relations neighbours and friends are invited and the poor are also fed. If the marriage proves successful, both the parties settle down in life with peace and contentment. The male partner is required to maintain the wife and children, and the wife is expected to manage the home affairs economically within the means of her husband. In order to safeguard morality and to maintain the integrity and solidarity of the family life, segregation is enjoined upon the two sexes. There are no mixed social gatherings, dances or mixed swimming in a Muslim society.

If the marital parties cannot adjust themselves temperamentally, they are asked to compose their differences mutually or with the help of other trustworthy people, and if they ultimately realize that it is not possible to get on any longer as husband and wife, they are commanded to part company with grace and dignity. The husband, even in this circumstance, is required to fulfil all his obligations towards the wife i.e., pay her full dower debt which he had settled upon her at the time of marriage, to settle a maintenance allowance on the divorced wife (for a few months) and on the separated children. There is no stigma attached to the remarriage of either the divorced wife or husband or even of a widow or widower. Woman has been given equal status along with man in all spheres of life. She is to be called by her own personal name, can inherit, own sale and transfer her property freely and can contract personally and can carry on business independently of her husband.

In their old age, the parents are not only looked after properly by the children but treated very kindly and sympathetically. Every care is taken of them and they are shown the greatest respect. When a Muslim falls ill, he repeatedly remembers God



Almighty and invokes His blessings. In fact he has greater faith in God Almighty than in the physician who is treating him. He never gets nervous or panicky however ill he might be and is prepared to undergo any hardship during the period of his illness as he thinks that it is all from God. He fully believes that the time of his death could not be put off nor could it precede the fixed time and he will have to meet his death at its appointed hour wherever he might be. For a Muslim life belongs to God ; he is only its custodian and must surrender it back when it is demanded from him. It is for this reason that a Muslim never thinks of committing suicide however serious the illness afflicting him. When he is on his death bed, he repeats the formula of his faith frequently, remembers Allah, and invokes His blessings. A particular Quranic verse is recited to give him sufficient strength in order to face the ordeal of death. When he breathes his last all his relations, neighbours and friends assemble on the funeral and they all utter the significant verse from the Quran meaning : "Verily we are all from God ; and to Him we shall all return." The utterance of these words acts as a great healer. There is no loud weeping or crying ; the whole audience prays for the soul of the deceased in silence. For three days no meals are prepared in the deceased family whose members are either entertained by neighbours, friends or relations. The dead body is properly washed and it is wrapped into simple and ordinary garments and then it is taken to the neighbouring cemetery without any coffin. For full one year the poor are fed and clothes are distributed among them. In many cases, even after the lapse of a year, weekly feeding of the poor is continued.

In every day life, every Muslim when he wakes up in the morning, he almost invariably repeats the formula of his faith, declaring the unity of God and the confirmation of the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be on him). When he begins any work, he does it in the name of God. When he is served by a fellow being ; he says 'May God compensate you for it'. When he commits a fault, he at once begs forgiveness from Allah. When he is placed in an awkward situation, he automatically says "May God protect us". In order to emphasise the corner-stone of the teaching of Islam which is nothing short of the establishment of universal peace, a Muslim



always greets another person with the phrase "Peace be on you", and the person addressed to replies in the same strain, "And on you be peace". This is the only formula of salutation among the Muslims.

After the age of puberty every Muslim is required to offer prayers five times a day after performing ablution, in the neighbouring mosque along with other believers, in order to remember Allah and His teachings and to practise the ideals enjoined by Islam *viz.*, equality, liberty, fraternity, social justice, discipline and toleration under the guidance of a leader. On every Friday, he is required to offer his prayer in a big mosque of the city where he is afforded the opportunity of listening to the sermon of the leader dealing with any aspect of Islamic religion. On the occasion of two annual gatherings, he is required to offer his prayer along with all the citizens of the district and to listen the annual sermon of the leader of the Muslim community.

All the adult Muslims are required to deposit two and a half percent of their accumulated savings at the end of the year into the Central Treasury for fulfilling the needs of the poor, the needy, and the wayfarer, etc. Besides that, on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage every Muslim is required to sacrifice a goat, or a cow or a camel. The flesh of the animal is divided into three equal parts, one part is given to the poor, the other is distributed among friends, relatives and neighbours and the remaining part is spent in entertaining the members of the family relatives and friends. The income derived from the sale of the skins of the sacrificed animals is spent in rendering financial assistance to the poor. On the occasion of the annual festival after the month of fasting, every one is required to give charity to the poor.

Every Muslim is also required to observe fast for thirty days in a year continuously in one particular month all over the world. Poor or rich, master or servant, black or white, all are required to undergo this privation without any exception so that there should be unity in thought and action. They should all feel the pangs of hunger and thirst and should abstain from all vices and indulgences



during this period. Nobody is allowed to eat or to drink from sunrise till sunset. When the time to break the fast comes, the Muslims usually sit together either in the neighbouring mosque or outside their houses. Everybody without any particular invitation is most welcome at the breakfast table.

Every Muslim is required to perform *Hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca once in his life-time, provided he has means to do so. Muslim society reaches its culminating point so far as the realisation of its ideals is concerned on this occasion. All men and women irrespective of their caste, colour, race, nationality, position, age or sex stand together in the two simple garments and pay homage to their God Almighty bare footed for three days. They are also required to make the sacrifice of a goat or a camel on this occasion for the benefit of the poor. Muslims from all parts of the world assemble on this occasion and after the *Hajj* rituals are over, the leaders from the various Muslim countries can sit down and deliberate over problems of common interest—religious, social, economic or political.

Islamic culture encourages the belief in the Unity of God in all the forms and action of the Muslims. It also discourages them in all those forms and action which might lead them to polytheism. That is why certain art-forms were discouraged by Islam in the beginning because of their association with the idolatrous worship of the pagan Arabs and its vicious orgies the utter extirpation of which was necessary for the progress of mankind ; but the discouragement of certain art expressions and encouragement of others were both, like the works of art produced, regarded as subsidiary. The culture of Islam aims not at beautifying and refining the accessories of human life ; it aims at beautifying and exalting human life itself.

Islam is not interested in the happiness and well-being of any particular section of the community. It is mostly concerned with the progress and happiness of the humanity as a whole. Hence it naturally encourages simplicity and economy in life, and discourages all the pleasures, luxuries and indulgences which can only be had at the cost of others. This is one of the main reasons behind the Islamic prohibition of drinking, gambling, dancing, the wearing of silken dress by men,



Islam thus foresees, and works for, a radiant future for the human race, and though every Muslim holds his own life cheap in the service of Allah, which is the service of humanity, he would never dream of sacrificing any human life, however insignificant it might appear, to the work of human hands.

Islam is a religion which specifically aims at human progress and shows the proper way of it in a number of commands and prohibitions, as well as every prompting of his mind and spirit. These commands and prohibitions have been codified into a complete social and political system. It is a practicable system for it has been practised with success for centuries, which is the great astonishment of history.

In the light of the above discussion, now let us find out the achievements of Islamic culture in the various fields of life.

#### Cultural Fields

The study of the Quran created in the minds of the early Muslims an urge to extend bounds of learning as far as they could. In order to grasp the full significance of the Quran, the Muslims developed several sciences which though originally born of the study of the Holy Book, are now separate branches of learning such as theology, jurisprudence, grammar, philology, rhetoric, etc. The thorough study of *Hadith* (sayings and practices of the Holy Prophet) led the Muslims to institute a science known as *Ilm al-Rijal* (Science of narrators of *Hadith*) by which they could easily test the authenticity or otherwise of *Hadith*. For understanding the various people and countries mentioned in the Quran they developed the study of History, Geography and various other sciences. They also carried on researches in Astronomy and Astrology in order to correctly appreciate the nature of earth, sky, stars, moon, sun, etc., referred to in the Holy Book. Thus they developed and improved Algebra, Chemistry, Physics, Mechanics, Medicine and other sciences. Furthermore, in order to extend the benefits of Islam to the people of different nationalities the Muslims founded the scholastic science known as *Ilm al-Kalam* by which they harmonised the doctrines of religion and the dictates of



reason. This process of rationalising led to the development of Muslim philosophy which, though it assimilated some points from Hellenic sources, had a distinct feature of its own. It was the force of Islamic culture that gave rise to the spirit of objective research and quantitative accuracy. This spirit is manifested in the scientific activities of the followers of Islam whose minuteness and perseverance stand in contrast with the speculative methods of the ancients. It was due to the intellectual influence of Islam that its followers laid the foundations of those methods of experimental research which in conjunction with mathematical analysis gave birth to modern science. It was the Book of Islam which created a revolt in the Muslim mind against the Greek philosophical thought which ignored all observations and experiment. This revolt, which laid the foundation of modern science, manifests itself in all departments of human thought. That is why Robert Briffault has said :

"It was not Science only which brought Europe back to life. Other and manifold influences from the civilization of Islam communicated its first glow to European life. And again although there is not a single aspect of European growth in which the decisive influence of Islamic Culture is not traceable, nowhere is it so clear and momentous as in the genesis of that power which constitutes the paramount distinctive force of the modern world, and the supreme source of its victory—natural science and the scientific spirit.

"The debt of our science to that of the Arabs does not consist in startling discoveries or revolutionary theories. Science owes a great deal more to the Arab Culture ; it owes its existence. The ancient world was prescientific. The Greeks systematised, generalised and theorised, but the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observations and experimental enquiry were altogether alien to the Greek temperament. What we call Science arose in Europe as a result of new spirit of enquiry, of new methods of investigation of the methods of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of Mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs."

The religion of Islam thus gave the world the gift of Science of which modern Europe is so proud. In the scientific methods which the followers of Islam introduced thus lay the future of the world,



the germ whence, after a maturation of centuries, was to burst forth the titanic force of modern science. In the words of the same author, "Science is the most momentous contribution of Arab civilization to the modern world." Indeed it would be difficult to exaggerate the part played by Islam in the intellectual awakening of mankind.

### **Social Field**

In the social field, Islam alone has succeeded in evolving distinctive characteristics because it did not content itself with defining the relation between man and the Unseen, but boldly stepped into the sphere of practical life and its everyday problems, of bread and sexual relations, of politics and trade and finance, and thus removed the barriers between the domains of Caesar and God. In the social field, the true spirit of Islam is manifested in the fact that it recognizes no caste or priesthood; no monopoly of divine knowledge or sanctity, no intermediary between man and his Creator. It treats all men and women equally as human beings. No distinction of colour, or birth, nationality or occupation is recognised. The only criterion of respectability in the social system propounded by Islam is the personal character of a person.

### **Economic Field**

The spirit of Islamic culture again manifests itself in the form of compulsory and voluntary contributions which every follower of Islam is bound to make towards the help and assistance of his less fortunate brethren. Every poor member of the Muslim society has to be looked after, to be fed, clothed and housed properly. The man who is in debt, the slave the traveller and the wayfarer, the widow and the orphan, all will have the right to the care and wealth of their more fortunate co-religionists.

Islam emancipated mankind by obviating the possibility of the accumulation of wealth in private hands as such accumulation proves harmful to the majority. It abolished interest, the greatest of the factors that produce fabulous fortunes and corresponding impoverishment and misery. It introduced the Law of Inheritance whereby no estate, large or small, can remain intact after the death of its owner.



It disallows exorbitant profits in trade and industry. It prohibits all speculation and immoral traffic. It enforces compulsory charity whereby no member of the society can be left without food or other necessities of life. Above all it encourages circulation of wealth by persuasion to spend and by condemnation of the malicious habit of hoarding wealth. In the words of the famous orientalist, Professor H.A.R. Gibb, "Islamic economic system stands midway between the two antagonistic systems of the world, viz. capitalism on the one hand and communism on the other".

Thus on the one hand, the accumulation of enormous wealth in private possession is rendered impossible and on the other, the needs of the poor are satisfied. There is consequently, no class war in Islam. During the whole course of Islamic History there have been no economic struggles between the different classes.

In the realm of politics, the spirit of Islamic culture enabled the Muslims to found an ideal welfare state based on the sovereignty of God i. e. the divine laws derived from the Holy Book and the traditions of their Prophet Muhammad, thus resulting in equality before law, affording equal opportunities for all, liberty of conscience, freedom of expression and criticism, social justice and toleration. It gave to the state a flexible constitution based on solid foundations. It lightened the burden of taxation and made all men equal in the domain of law. By placing the sovereign power under the control of the divine law (*Shariah*), the spirit of Islamic culture imparted to Islamic Law a tendency to allow human action the widest limits consonant with public peace. It encouraged every practical activity and censured all those which burdened others with their maintenance. It required every man to keep himself by the produce of his own labour and did not despise any sort of genuine work whereby man could make himself independent of others.

The spirit of Islamic culture imparted to man the right to personal safety and freedom as the birthright of every man. He could not dispose of his personal liberty even at his own pleasure. That is why Islamic Law did not recognize a spontaneous admission of slavery and that is why it forbids suicides. It is now admitted that the high ethical standard of Islamic Law has acted favourably on the



development of modern concepts and therein lies the enduring merit of this law.

In the sphere of international relations Islam inculcated the idea of universal brotherhood of man as against the geographical distribution of mankind into separate and mutually antagonistic nationalities. It granted respect and self-determination to the subject races of the world, and made the observation of international morality a religious imperative. For this reason Muslims have generally distinguished themselves for honouring their political promises and discharging their international obligations.

Their spirit of Islamic culture manifested itself with greater resplendence when it regulated the war-time conduct of the followers of Islam so as to minimise the loss of life and property.

The Muslims through the force of their culture not only succeeded in founding an ideal Islamic Empire, but also maintained it for over one thousand years with slight variations in their ideals. By spreading the teachings and virtues of Islam and their simultaneous political domination over the neighbouring Empires, they succeeded in emancipating the subject races both in the East as well as in the West from their mental, social, intellectual, economic and physical bondage. As long as the Muslims followed the fundamentals of the Quran and the traditions of their Prophet Muhammad, supplemented by the true spirit of Islamic culture, they maintained their supremacy in all fields of life and they were regarded as leaders of thought and action. The moment they deviated from their fundamental principles and their culture got mixed up with the culture of the subject races, they began to decline as a nation. The beginning of the eighteenth century saw them proceeding towards their downfall. From this time onwards, the Europeans who had begun to practise some of the cardinal Muslim ideals, began to rise and during the nineteenth and the twentieth century they became the leaders of thought and actions and displaced the Muslims from their dominant position. It was but natural as the laws of Islam are similar to the physical laws of nature. Those who would follow them would become the leaders, and those who would neglect them would go down irrespective of the fact whether they are known to the world as Muslims or non-Muslims.







## Islamic History at a Glance

Islam appeared on the stage of world history at a period which is regarded as one of the darkest in human history. It was a period when Religion, the main support of morality in human history and perhaps the only powerful force which has been instrumental in uplifting man from the plane of animal existence, had been grossly distorted. Christianity, which has been one of the greatest spiritual forces in human history, had lost the original teachings of Jesus and had degenerated into a cult which had precious little to offer besides a set of confounding and incomprehensible dogmas and barren rituals. During the course of its development, the ascetic element of Christianity had come to occupy such a pre-eminent position in the framework of its doctrines and rituals that it stood like a block in the way of human progress and the self-fulfilment of man in his earthly existence. As for India and Persia, they were in the grip of the religious movements which, to say the least, played no positive role in orienting man towards goodness and moral purity. Leaving religions aside, the Byzantine and Sassanid Empires held sway over large parts of the civilized world of those times, and possessed the sheen and glory of civilized, and yet decaying empires. Despite their imposing exterior, however, their innervitality had been sapped. Besides, judging their worth in human terms, the two Empires had become the instruments of socio-economic injustice, exploitation and oppression, and thus had lost all moral justification for their continued existence. Thus the entire civilized world of those days was engulfed in darkness, without any light and promise from any quarter whatsoever.

As for Arabia, which was destined to become the cradle of Islam, the picture of human life there was even more shocking. Steeped in ignorance, the Arabian bedouins had no heavenly religion.



to guide their life. Having lost the teachings of the earlier prophets they had become the followers of pagan cults and had become long accustomed to a licentiousness and libertinism which knew no moral bounds. These Arabs were undoubtedly a vigorous and hardy people, unspoiled by the softness of civilization. But their genius had no channels of expression except in tribal feuds which led to uncalled for, purposeless, unnecessary bloodshed, or in erotic poetry.

It is in such a period of human history that Muhammad (Peace be on him) born and embarked upon his prophetic mission. His message mainly consisted of calling people towards belief in a strict unity of the Creator; towards belief in man's responsibility to God and his liability to rendering an account and consequently receiving reward and punishment in the hereafter; towards belief in the necessity of moulding one's conduct according to the code of moral guidance revealed by God. The faith preached by Muhammad (Peace be on him) possessed the grandeur of simplicity and the vigour of truth. The dogmas that man was required to believe in were clear and easily comprehensible and in order to have faith in them one need not put any strain on one's brain or paralyse one's common sense. Moreover, while stressing the spiritual and moral aspects, the new faith had a positive attitude towards man's worldly life. It stood for the self-fulfilment of man as a whole, for the satisfaction of all his urges--spiritual as well as material. If one were to borrow Nietche's terminology, one might say that Islam said 'Yes' to life and 'No' to asceticism; 'Yes' to action, 'No' to quietism. Islam recognized man's urge to live as a fruitful instinct. It even sanctified this instinct into an ethical postulate. It taught man in effect: "You may not only satisfy your urge to live; it is rather your moral and religious duty to do so." The result was that Muhammad's role in history not only lay in spiritualizing and moralising the countless millions of the east and the west among whom his religion spread, but also in leading human race towards material progress. Wherever Islam reached, it ennobled human life and also proved to be a force conducive to material advancement, and the spread of refinement and culture. In fact, the real significance of Muhammad (Peace be on him) is that at a stage when man appeared to be on the brink of abyss, with no promise except that



of decay and doom, he preached a religion which led the caravan of mankind towards an all-round progress and advancement.

The Prophet breathed his last in 632 A. D. But before his death he had succeeded in training a large army of devoted standard-bearers of his message whose lives he had purified, and whose hearts he had inflamed with the love of a noble cause. He had organized his followers into a compact society and had also established a state which, at the time of his demise, had come to embrace approximately the whole of Arabian peninsula.

### **The Pious Caliphate :**

Abu Bakr, a devoted companion of Muhammad (Peace be on him) was chosen caliph by the *ummah* (community) of the Prophet to continue serving the cause of the faith as the leader of the Muslim community and as the head of the young Islamic State. He was, therefore, called the *Khalifa* (successor) of the Prophet. He carried on the affairs of the community in strictest conformity with the spirit of Islamic teachings and the life-example of the Prophet. The same was the practice of the three Caliphs who succeeded him. This period of Islamic history is venerated by Muslims as the ideal period of their history and is termed as *Khilafat-e-Rashidah* (the Rightly-guided Caliphate). During this period the message of the Prophet remained the predominant inspiration with the Muslims and this enabled them to approximate to their ideals of good life to the closest degree which is humanly possible. The Muslims of this period of history were religiously devout and morally on the highest conceivable plane. The life of the people in general had been so thoroughly purified—thanks to the moralizing influence of Muhammad's teachings—that this period shines forth in all human history as the most illustrious period from the moral point of view. In no other period of history has such a big proportion of people risen so high in moral stature. In no other period of man's existence has there been such a negligibly low rate of crimes. In no other period has man succeeded to such a degree in subordinating his animal desires to higher and finer considerations. In no other age have man's spiritual and moral sensitivities been as intense as in this golden age of Islam.



Apart from that, the state in those days was, and naturally so an ideal state. It played a positive role—to use Islamic terminology—in bidding what is good and forbidding what is evil. It was a social welfare state which implemented an ambitious scheme of social insurance and considered itself responsible to procure the elementary needs of life to each and every individual. Moreover, it succeeded in meeting out even-handed justice to all. It ensured genuine freedom of belief and expression, and the freedom to criticise and oppose the government by peaceful means to an astonishing degree. It fostered the spirit of genuine liberty and the rulers themselves exhorted the people to set them right whenever they went astray. In short, the state was an important means for the realization of Muslim aspirations of good life, and it took sufficient care of the people under its jurisdiction from the religious; moral and material points of view.

Besides largely succeeding in putting their ideals into effect, Muslims also launched upon a career of expansion in order to liberate mankind from the yoke of subjugation to false gods and from the oppression of tyrannical rulers, and to ensure for large section of oppressed humanity social and economic justice and to procure to them the freedom to appreciate the last message of the Lord to mankind. This expansion had also been occasioned by the hostile attitude that had been adopted by the two Empires of those days, viz, the Sassanid and the Byzantine Empires, towards Islam and Muslims. Infused with the spirit to carry the message of God to mankind the Muslims spread East and West with an astonishing speed. Hardly fifteen years had passed after the death of the Prophet when Muslim expansion had spread from the Atlantic to the coasts of the Pacific; and an area was occupied which was as large as the continent of Europe. Within two decades the Muslims had become the masters of a vast empire extending from Tripoli (Libya) to Balkh, and from Armenia to Sindh and Gujrat (Indo-Pakistan sub-continent), through the intervening territories of Syria, Iraq and Iran, and had shown low to the two great empires of those days.

With regard to these conquests it is remarkable that the conquered were nowhere discontented. This is proven by the fact that in 656 A. D. when the Muslims suffered from their first civil wars,



no internal uprising took place and the Byzantine Emperor could not count in the least on his former subjects. On the contrary, the people of the conquered areas heaved a sigh of relief at having been released from the bondage of tyranny, particularly so because under the Muslim rule they enjoyed freedom of conscience, justice and prosperity. Nothing is a better tribute to the liberal dispensation of Muslims than a letter written by a Nestorian bishop of those days to a friend of his which has been preserved: "These Tayites (*i.e.* Arabs), to whom God has accorded domination in our days, have also become our masters; yet they do not combat at all the Christian religion: on the contrary, they even protect our faith, respect our priests and our saints and make donations to our churches and our convents."

#### **The Umayyads**

The Caliphate underwent change in its character when the Umayyad house established itself into power and ruled over the Islamic State for about a century (661—750). The first ruler of the dynasty, Muawiyah himself seems to have been conscious of this change and he is reported to have summed it up in a brief sentence: "I am the first king in Islam." The essentially democratic and religious character of the Caliphate was impaired, though its form was retained. But the change was not confined merely to the form of Muslim political organization. Its spirit also changed to some extent. The Pious Caliphs had been exclusively devoted to the cause of religion; ambitions of personal power and glory, of power for its own sake, had no place in their way of thinking. Not so were the Umayyad Caliphs in general. The Umayyad Caliphs were neither men of so pious, religious and moral character as the Orthodox Caliphs nor so intensely devoted to the cause of Islam as their predecessors, the Pious Caliphs. The promotion of the cause of Islam remained none of their main concerns. Thus even though this period can boast of large conquests, of stimulating progress in various fields of life, it also had numerous failings from Islamic standards and the Muslims generally look at this period as far less approximating their ideals than the pious Caliphate.

To this period, however, belong some of the most illustrious



Islamic conquests including those of Sind right upto Multan in the East and of Spain and Portugal in the West. It is during the regime of the Umayyad Caliphs al-Walid and Hisham that the Islamic empire reached its greatest expansion, stretching from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and the Pyrenese to the Indus and the confines of China, an extent hardly rivalled in ancient times and surpassed in recent times only by the British and Russian Empires.

The closeness of the period to the Jahiliyah age, its numerous wars, civil and foreign, and the unsettled social and economic conditions of the Muslim world—all these hampered intellectual development during the Umayyad period. But the seed was then sown and the tree of knowledge that blossomed under the Abbasids in Baghdad had its roots in the preceding period. The Umayyad age, therefore, was in general one of incubation. Nevertheless, broad-mindedness and adaptability and the capacity to assimilate elements from foreign cultures, which have characterised Islamic culture in the greater part of the fourteen centuries of Islamic history, were becoming evident during the Umayyad period when Muslims had started to adopt the useful and healthy elements from Persian, Greek and Syrian sources.

While the real age of Muslim cultural and material attainments was to follow, the Muslims during the Umayyad period eagerly applied themselves to religious sciences, to Lexicography and Grammar, and to history-writing and thus laid the foundation of their later intellectual achievements. Among non-religious sciences, Medicine was particularly patronized by the government which undertook the translation from the Greek and other languages into Arabic. Another important achievement of this period was changing the language of public registers from Greek to Arabic in Damascus and from Pahlavi to Arabic in al-Iraq and Persia, as also the creation of Arabic coinage.

Turning to the material aspect of life, industry received a powerful impetus during the Umayyad period and trade relations between Muslims and a number of Eastern and Western lands were established.



### The Abbasids

With the rise into power of the 'Abbasids in 750 A. D. began the process of the division of the Muslim world first into two parts, and later into ever-increasing parts. Andalusia (Spain) declared its independence under the Umayyad prince Abd al-Rahman. The same happened in Africa where in the tenth century a rival Caliphate of the Ismailite Sect, and a very powerful one, was established and but for brief periods of interregnum, the Islamic territories in Africa remained independent from Baghdad, the seat of the Abbasid Caliphate.

The five centuries of the Abbasid Caliphate have, in general, not seen any remarkable military conquests. This was, however, more than compensated by the Abbasid victories of peace. The Abbasid rulers established an efficient, honest and vigorous administration. Their main concern was to ensure justice and well-being of the populace, a purpose which animated their government institutions. Special steps were taken to prevent the officials from levying extortionate taxes or oppressing the subjects. Similarly, good care was taken to restrain the commercial class from fleecing the common man by means of exorbitant prices.

The Abbasid policy with regard to non-Muslims was the same in spirit as in the times of Pious Caliphate. In return for a nominal tax levied on the able-bodied non-Muslims, they enjoyed Muslim protection of their life, property, and honour and were ensured the right to profess their faith. The non-Muslims enjoyed very considerable freedom, as also equality of rights and opportunities with Muslims. The most important privilege that the non-Muslims enjoyed under Islamic dispensation, under the Pious Caliphs, the Umayyads, the Abbasids and later under other Muslims dynasties, was their judicial autonomy. In matters of civil and criminal judicial procedure, the non-Muslims were practically under their own spiritual heads and their cases were decided according to their own Personal Law. This was in compliance with the explicit Quranic injunctions. For instance, the Quran says: "Let the people of the Gospel judge by that which God hath revealed therein". (Surah V),



The Abbasid period was also a period of great material prosperity and industrial progress. Regular trade was conducted even with such far-off lands as China, and the Malaya Archipelago, and as recent researches show, with the Scandinavian countries of Europe. What, however, has rendered the period especially illustrious in world annals is the fact that it witnessed the most momentous intellectual awakening in the history of Islam and one of the most significant ones in the whole history of thought and culture. Muslims of the period were given over completely to a *frenzied passion* of the acquirement of knowledge from every possible source. The Muslims started their intellectual adventure with a vast amount of translation of Persian, Sanskrit, Syriac and Greek works. Starting with very little of Science, philosophy or literature, the Arabian Muslim who had brought with him from the desert a keen sense of intellectual curiosity, soon became the beneficiary and heir of the older and more cultured peoples whom he conquered and encountered. During the translation phase which lasted roughly from 750-850 A. D., the work was carried so diligently that by mid-ninth century the Arabic-speaking world was already in possession of the chief philosophical works of Aristotle, of the leading Neo-Platonic commentators, and of most of the medical writings of Galen, as well as of Persian and Indian scientific works. "In only a few decades," observes Hitti, "the Arabs assimilated what had taken the Greeks centuries to develop." It is to be noted, as Hitti observes, that "all this took place while Europe was almost totally ignorant of Greek thought and science. For while al-Rashid and al-Mamun were delving into Greek and Persian Philosophy their contemporaries in the West, Charlemagne and his lords, were reportedly dabbling in the art of writing their names."

In mid-ninth century the Muslims started a period of original contributions to the various branches of learning. It goes to their credit that within a few centuries they produced some of the most illustrious scientists, philosophers, historians and jurists of human history. The additions made by Muslims to the common treasure of human knowledge is too rich and varied to be described here. The most important contribution of Muslims in the history of science was the introduction of the inductive method, the method of observation

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and experiment which was not known to the Greeks and which the Muslims passed on to Europe during the middle ages and which now forms the foundation of modern science.

During this period Muslims were the most advanced people of the world ; their lands were glowing centres of culture, civilization and enlightenment. Muslim progress, prosperity, and the over-all attitude of toleration presented a sharp contrast to the backwardness, poverty and fanaticism which held Europe in their grip. Contrast was most strikingly represented by the outpost of Islamic culture in Europe—Spain . Suffice here to quote the opinion of a non-Muslim historian, Stanley Lane-Poole :

The history of Spain offers us a melancholy contrast. Twelve hundred years ago, Tarik the Moor, added, the land of the Visigoths to the long catalogue of Kingdoms subdued by the Moslems. For nearly eight centuries, under her Mohammedan rulers, Spain set to all Europe a shining example of a civilized and enlightened state. Her fertile provinces, rendered doubly prolific by the industry and engineering skill of her conquerors, bore fruit an hundred-fold. Cities innumerable sprang up in the rich valleys of Guadalquivir and Guadiana, whose names, and names only, still commemorate the vanished glories of their past. Art, literature, and science prospered as they then prospered nowhere else in Europe. Students flocked from France and Germany and England to drink from the fountains of learning which flowed only in the cities of the Moors. The surgeons and doctors of Andalusia were in the van of science ; women were encouraged to devote themselves to serious study and the lady doctor, was not unknown among the people of Cordova. Mathematics, Astronomy and Botany, History, Philosophy and Jurisprudence were to be mastered in Spain and Spain alone. The practical work of the field, the scientific method of irrigation, the arts of fortification and ship-building, the highest and most elaborate products of the loom, the graver and the hammer, the potter's wheels were brought to perfection by the Spanish Moors. In the practice of war no less than in the arts of peace they long stood supreme. What-



soever makes a kingdom great and prosperous, whatsoever tends to refinement and civilization, was found in Moslem Spain.

The Abbasid period, however, was not without blemishes. A number of developments had led to the weakening of the Caliphate. The Isma'elite hereties and their terrorism, the rise of a number of dynasties and consequently the outbreak of many civil wars, and in general the decline in the military acumen of the people due to the softening effects of ease and luxury—all these had a baneful impact on the health and vitality of the Muslim body-politic. The result was that when the Mongol hordes under Hulagu attacked Baghdad in 1258, A.D. they could easily sack the city, massacre its populace, burn its libraries and demolish the proud cultural achievements of the Muslims. The Abbasid Caliphate came to an end, teaching Muslims the lesson that the possession of the sword is a must for the protection of all finer attainments, and that all progress and refinement are vain and illusory if they are attained at the expense of military strength. Similarly, the Andalusian Muslims who have written some of the brightest chapters of Islamic history, gradually lost their unity and became a house divided against itself, constantly engaged in internecine warfare. Gradually effeminacy and love of ease spread among them and consequently the Christians of Europe succeeded in dismantling this citadel of Muslim power and glory in the fifteenth century. In a country which had seen about eight hundred years of brilliant Muslim rule—the only brilliant epoch in its history—not a single Muslim remained.

### **The Ottomans**

The thirteenth century of the Christian calendar is regarded by Muslims as the most ominous century in so far as their centuries-old Caliphate was destroyed and Baghdad, their centre of culture and civilization, sacked by barbarian hordes. But the closing years of this century saw the rise of a new power—the Ottoman Turks in Asia Minor. These Ottoman Turks were destined to carry the flag of Islam in Europe for about seven centuries. Aflame with the desire to expand the domains of Islam, the Ottomans reached the zenith of their power in the 16th century when they



had reached the walls of Vienna. In those days, the Ottoman Empire ruled in Europe as far as Austria, in North Africa as far as Algeria, and in Asia from Georgia to Yemen passing in between through Mesopotamia, Arabia and Asia Minor. Besides these conquests, the Ottomans in their heyday also offered an efficient and honest administration and a good measure of social and economic justice. The Ottomans developed fine socio-economic and political institutions, which were largely in line with those found in the Abbasid Caliphate. These institutions furnished the basic framework for ensuring the Islamic ideals of equality, public weal and toleration and freedom.

The Ottomans remained a formidable power, a challenge to the neighbouring states in Europe roughly until the 17th century when their decay—which had continued for some time—became evident and started assuming alarming proportions.

The Ottomans generally kept themselves pre-occupied with conquests and their age is not noted for any significant intellectual contributions. Moreover, the Ottomans, unlike their predecessors, did not display much of a creative genius. They followed more or less the fixed patterns they had inherited from the past. But their adversaries, the European powers, had awakened to a new life after the Crusades, and particularly during the 15th and 16th centuries, largely as a result of contact with the Muslim world in general, and Muslim Spain in particular. They had broken the shackles of tradition and had set out in search of new ways. Thus, they brought about tremendous improvements everywhere—particularly in their army organisation and in their armaments. Later on, they achieved striking success in the fields of science and technology which enabled them to operate on a higher level of energy than the world of Islam. The Ottomans, however, kept on trying to ossify their traditional institutions and the obsolete moulds of their way of life. They were, therefore, outstripped by the European powers whose deep enmity they had aroused by following a policy of unremitting expansion at their cost. To these European powers the Ottomans gradually lost large parts of their territory. The process continued till 1919 when the Ottoman Empire became a shadow of its former



greatness. Subsequently, the Empire broke up; the Caliphate was abolished, giving place to the Republic of Turkey.

### Other Islamic Areas

The story of Islam's earthly career covers too vast an expanse of time and space to make it possible for us to deal with it adequately even in brief. Two areas, however, deserve special mention : Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and the Indonesian Archipelago.

Muslims had conquered parts of India early in the 8th century but the process had not gone further. The conquest in right earnest was taken up later in the 11th century by the Ghaznavid dynasty of Afghanistan. Since then, Muslims remained the rulers of the bulk of the sub-continent until mid-nineteenth century. The Great Mughals (1526-1857) are particularly celebrated in the Muslim history of India. For a long time, they ruled over almost the "big" of the world. Their central authority began to be weakened by the action of provincial governors from the eighteenth century onwards. In 1858 the British took over the control of India and the Mughal rule came to an end.

During their long rule over India, the Muslims have imprinted their stamp on every aspect of Indian life. The customs, the intimate details of domestic life, music, the fashions of dress, the ways of cooking, the ceremonials of marriage, all these bear the indelible impression of Muslim culture. But apart from these details of relatively less importance, Islam has deeply influenced the basic orientation of the Indian society. Prior to the advent of Islam, the Hindu society stood divided, fragmented and broken into watertight compartments. Under caste system the society was rigidly divided into four classes the *Brahmans* (i.e. priests) the *Khashtrayas* (i.e. soldiers and warriors), the *Vaishyas* (i.e. the business class) and the *Shudras* (i.e. the untouchables). The Brahman tyranny had grown to wildest proportions and the *Shudras* were leading a sub-human life. Under such conditions the light of Islam appeared on the Indo-Pakistan horizon. It came with a message of universal brotherhood and heralded a new era in the religious and social life of India. The influence of Muslims who despised the sanctity of



Brahmans and proclaimed the unity of God began to operate gradually. The egalitarian and democratic character of Muslim social life ultimately paved the way for the incorporation of democratic values and institutions.

Another gift of Muslims to India is historical literature. Among the Hindus the sense of chronology was very imperfectly developed. Before the advent of Muslims the Hindus had produced no true history at all. In contrast to Hindus, the Muslim rulers kept a regular record of their reign which provided a solid basis for historical study. India would have been deprived of all the records of her past if Muslim historians had not recorded what they have done. In fact a systematic, regular and reliable history of India begins only with the advent of the Muslim rule.

The Muslim rulers of India in general and Mughal Kings in particular, were great patrons of art, literature and architecture. The pursuit of beauty seems to have become an overpowering craze with the Mughal emperors who decked the whole country with beautiful gardens, palaces, mosques and masoleums. Taj Mahal, which is one of the wonders of the world, is a living monument of Moghul architectural greatness.

Last, but not the least, the Muslims broke the hegemony of Sanskrit and developed common vernacular languages known as Urdu and Hindi, which ultimately became the national languages of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. Among these Urdu has developed a very rich literature during the span of just a few centuries and expresses some of the finest and æsthetically superb aspects of the Indo-Pakistan Islamic culture.

In South East Asia, (east of Indo-Pak subcontinent) Islam spread through a unique process of peaceful propagation unaccompanied by any political influence or military campaign. Islam was carried to this region, first by the Arab traders who since the early centuries of Islam traversed the whole length of Asian sea-route from the Persian Gulf to Canton (China) in quest of peaceful commerce and set up numerous Muslim colonies at important intermediary stations. They were later joined by Muslim merchants of India



and Persia as well by the Sufi savants who dedicated their lives to the propagation of Islam: through the peaceful efforts of these merchants and *Sufis*, from the 13th to 15th century A.D. the Malayan Peninsula, and Indonesian were completely won over to Islam.

During this period moral and spiritual life of these peoples had greatly degenerated by the nefarious influences of Tantrik Hinduism and Tantarik Buddhism on the one hand and by the horror of local animistic superstition and witch-craft on the other. Islam with its doctrines of simple monotheism, universal justice, equality and brotherhood came to the rescue of these debased and perplexed peoples and the preachers of the light of Islam, were acclaimed as Saviours everywhere in Malaya and Indonesia. Conversion to Islam gradually became the fashion of the day, so that during the fifteenth century Muslim kingdoms sprang up throughout the lands stretching from Malaya to Mindanao (in Philippine). The triumph of Islam in this region, was the triumph of truth and beauty of its doctrines which freed the people from the shackles of superstition and elevated their souls to a higher plane of moral and spiritual life. Their conversion to Islam also brought them in close contact with the wealth of Muslim culture and the progressive social system of Islam which flourished brilliantly in contemporary world. While the process of proselytisation of the masses was accomplished from the 15th to the 18th century and the people were progressively brought under the civilising influence of Islam, these regions also increasingly fell a prey to the colonial designs of the newly rising Western nations—Portuguese, Spanish, English and the Dutch.

Although through a long and sustained struggle from the 16th to the 19th century, the Western powers succeeded in subjugating these peoples, they failed, in spite of best efforts of the Christian missionaries, to check the progress of Islam. Islam infused the Malayan races of Malaya and Indonesia a high sense of cohesion and unity and their languages vastly enriched by Islamic lores found the finest expression in Perso-Arabic script. In their ceaseless fight against colonialism, Islam also provided them with an all-pervasive ideal and the rallying ground for the expression of their patriotism.



The rise of the idea of the right of self-determination of nations in the 20th century gave an opportunity to the Muslims of Malaya and Indonesia to shake off the shackles of foreign rule. Availing themselves to an opportunity at the end of the second world war, the Indonesians declared their independence in 1945 and fought to victory against the Dutch. Likewise, Malaya also achieved freedom recently from the British rule and both the countries now thrive as important state in the community of Nations.

### **In Modern Times**

The last three centuries are centuries of Muslim decadence. Muslims remained steeped in the stagnant patterns of their life. They refused to heed to the signs of the time and respond to the call of change and progress which had been so ably done by their ancestors. They gave up their former spirit of intellectual inquiry and investigation; their former unquenching thirst for things better cooled down. The Muslims dismally failed in this regard, but not the Christian Europe, which, availing herself fully of the treasures of Muslim learning, opened for herself new, undreamt of vistas of progress. The result was that European nations succeeded in subjugating large parts of the Muslim world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Subjugation by European powers, however, proved a blessing in disguise for the Muslim world. It shook the Muslims into giving up their complacency and realizing their weaknesses. It also set ablaze the love of freedom which has, by now, led to the restoration of independence to all except a few Muslim countries; and these countries too are not far from their cherished goal of freedom. Contact with the West was beneficial in another way. It stimulated a new life and awakening throughout the Islamic world. However, it has also created baffling problems for Muslims: the problems centring around the integration of modernity into their ideological framework without allowing the unhealthy features of the modern Western culture to undermine the Islamic system of values. The Muslims of our times are keen to become and remain free, and to exercise their right to shape their own destiny. They are also keen to move forward towards building up a healthy, progressive, and modern civilization in their lands. And last, but not the least, they are keen that this civilization, in



addition to being vigorous and modern, should also be Islamic: it should embody the life-giving teachings imparted to mankind by the greatest teacher of humanity and the last Prophet of God, Muhammad (peace be upon him).

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## INTELLECTUAL AWAKENING DURING THE MEDIEVAL MUSLIM PERIOD I ABBASID.

The year 750 A.D., which witnessed the replacement of the Umayyad dynasty by the Abbasids, not only heralded a new era in the history of Islam but also proved a turning point in the course of world history. The century had opened with marauding conquest of the Muslims under the Umayyad generals. About 705 A.D., Oxas river was crossed and in course of the following ten years, the banners of Islam were planted in Jaxartes in the heart of central Asia. To the east, the abode of Islam was pushed into Sind and Baluchistan in 710 A.D. About the same time the entire North Africa was brought under Muslim rule. In 711 A.D., crossing Gibraltar the Muslims entered Europe, conquered Spain and in the following two decades going beyond the Pyrenees, they were disputing the territories of the Southern France with the Gaul. Professor Hitti has rightly pointed out that in one hundred years after the death of the Prophet the domain of his successor in Damascus had become a world empire extending from China to Gaul. In the eastern frontier, the Turkish and Mongolian hordes intervened between Muslimdom and China. The Byzantine empire, shorn of its outer provinces, was battered by the Muslim arms into its narrow cloister in between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The central Europe (the domains of the long defunct Western Roman Empire then reduced into provincial kingdoms by the barbarian races such as Gauls, Germans and Servians) was seriously threatened from the Muslim bases in Spain. Normally ready to fly at each other's throat at the first opportunity, Germany, Italy and France were goaded by deep apprehension of common danger to make a united stand under the banner of Papacy to resist further inroad of Islam, about 732 A.D. In a breath taking suspense did the world watch the next move of the bearers of the crescent.

But under the Umayyads, Islam and some of its values which gave them the glory and greatness, had fallen into disdain. In place of equality and brotherhood of all Muslims, they had enshrined a



policy of Arabism based on the superiority of the Arabs over the Muslims of other extractions. This made the non-Arabian Muslims lukewarm in paying homage to the Umayyad rulers. On the other hand, the policy of Arabism made the Arabs intensely conscious of their tribalism to the extent of by-passing Islam resulting in the revival of ancient feuds between the North Arabians and South Arabians and in mutual war unto destruction throughout the empire. Moreover, strong secularising tendency of the Umayyads had antagonised the Muslim scholars and theologians who wielded great power over the masses and the implacable hatred of the Meccans, Madinese and Shiaites against the Umayyad family, all went side by side to menace their authority, which called to a halt further advance of Islam from about 732 to 750 A.D. At this juncture, when the destiny of the world history hanged in a balance, the above forces conjured together to bring about one of the greatest revolutions in the bosom of Islam, which ended the dynasty of the Umayyads and invested the Abbasids with the central authority over Muslimdom.

In 750 A.D., when the Abbasids celebrated their victory with a general massacre of the Umayyad princes, one of them, Abdur Rahman, managed to make good his escape to Spain and established an independent Umayyad kingdom over the European possessions of the Empire. The Abbasids, therefore, had to remain content with the eastern possessions of the Caliphate and Europe was for the time being left alone to measure her arms with a petty local dynasty instead of facing the whole brunt of the Muslim power. On the other hand, pressing need for the consolidation of power, turned the attention of the new dynasty more and more to the improvement of the organisation of the state, development of trade and industrial potentialities of the dominion, and above all, which went to the eternal credit of the Abbasids, towards patronization of artists, scholars and scientists for the greater conquest of Intellectual hurdles and mastering the mystries of nature.

The Abbasids dynasty was established by the descendants of Hazrat Abbas, one of the much honoured uncles of the Holy Prophet, belonging to the Prophet's clan of Banu Hashim of the Quraish. The Abbasid victory was generally hailed as representing the



substitution of the true concept of the Caliphate for the secular state of the Umayyads. Although in practice, there remained much to be desired for the fulfilment of this requirement, the Abbasids succeeded to win confidence of the orthodoxy and true to their promise to the bulk of their supporters who were mainly Persian Muslims, they accorded equal treatment to all the new converts along with the Arabs. Henceforth the non-Arabs assumed, as common subjects of the state, their proper place as citizens of the Caliphate and were admitted to the highest employment of the state enjoying equal consideration with their Arab brothers.

“A greater revolution than this has scarcely been witnessed either in ancient or modern times, (excepting the period of Pious Caliphate) it gave practical effect to the democratic enunciation of the equality and brotherhood of man. To this is mainly due the extraordinary vitality of the Abbasid Caliphate and the permanence of its spiritual supremacy even after it had lost its temporal authority. The acceptance of this fundamental principle of racial equality among all their subjects helped the early sovereigns of the house of Abbas to build up a fabric which endured without a rival for over five centuries from 750 to 1258 A. D. and fell only before a barbarian attack of the Mongol hordes from without.”

As the advocates of Islamic State, the Abbasids modelled their government on the fundamentals of Islam; viz : equality, liberty, fraternity, social justice and toleration towards other faiths. After establishing their government, the Abbasid Caliphs took energetic steps for the promotion of Islamic culture and civilization. They invited learned scholars from all over the Empire and patronised them so that they might collect all the religious literature, particularly the traditions of the Prophet ; and also in codifying the Muslim Law.

After the Romans the Arabs were the only medieval people who cultivated the science of jurisprudence and evolved therefrom an independent legal system. Their legal system, Fiqh, as they called it, was primarily based on the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Fiqh was the science through which the canon Law of Islam (Shariah), the totality of



Allah's commandments as revealed in the Quran and elaborated in the traditions, was communicated to later generations. The commandments embrace regulations relating to morality, ritual and worship, civil and legal obligations and punishments. After the Quran, the basic source of Muslim Law is the Sunnah, which embodies the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet and is found in the works of Ahadith. The Sunnah supplements, elaborates and explains the basic principles laid down in the Holy Quran.

The second and third Muslim centuries saw the compilation of the various collections of traditions (Ahadith) into six books which have since become standard. Of the six books the first and most authoritative is that of Muhammad Ibn Ismail al Bukhari. (810-70). Out of the 600,000 traditions, he collected from 1,000 sheikhs in the course of sixteen years of travel and labours in Persia, al-Iraq, al Hijaz and Egypt some 7,275 traditions which he classified according to subject matter, such as prayer, pilgrimage, holy war, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Next in importance comes the collection of Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (875) of Naysapur, a work on which Muslims have conferred the same title, *al-Sahih*, the genuine collection. Next to these two genuine books come four others which Muslims have elevated to canonical rank. These are the Sunan of Abu Dawud of al-Basra (888), the Jami of al-Tirmidhi (892), the Sunan of Ibn Majah of Qazwin (886) and the Sunan of al-Nassi who died at Makkah in 1915. A.D.

It may be noted here that among the six collections of Traditions mentioned above, which are known as the six reliable collections, al-Bukhari holds the first place in several respects. In the first place, al-Bukhari has the unquestioned distinction of being first, all the others modelling their writings on his. Secondly, he is the chronologically most critical of all. He did not accept any tradition unless all its transmitters were reliable and until there was proof that the later transmitter had actually met the first; the mere fact that the two were contemporaries (which is Muslim's

1. This does not mean that the traditions not included in the compilation were spurious or not genuine. In fact most of them are genuine, only they did not come upto the standard set by Imam Bukhari.



test) did not satisfy him. Thirdly, in his taffaqquh or acumen, he surpasses all. Fourthly, he heads the more important of his chapters with a text from the Quran, and thus shows that Tradition is only an explanation of the Quran, and as such a secondary, though undoubtedly essential, source of the teachings of Islam.

There is no doubt that the collectors of traditions attached the utmost importance to the trustworthiness of the narrators. As Guillaume says : "Inquiries were made as to the character of the narrators, whether they were morally and religiously satisfactory, whether they were tainted with heretical doctrines, whether they had a reputation for truthfulness and had the ability to transmit that they had themselves heard. Finally, it was necessary that they should be competent witnesses whose testimony would be accepted in a court of civil law. More than this, they tried their best to find out that the report was traceable to the Prophet through the various necessary stages. Nay they went beyond the narrators, and they had rules of criticism which were applied to the subject matter of Tradition.

In the eighth century of the Christian era came the great jurists who codified the Islamic Law according to the need of their time. The first of these, and the one who claims the allegiance of the greater part of the Muslim world, was Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit (80-150 A.H.) The basis of his analogical reasoning (Qiyas) was the Quran. He accepted Tradition only when he was fully satisfied as to its authenticity. He also laid down the principle of equity, whereby not only could new laws be made, but even logical conclusions could be controverted when they proved to be inequitable. He recognized the importance of customs and usages, and utilized them so much in forming independence of judgement that he and his followers were called upholders of private judgement,

The second, Imam Malik ibn Anas (93-173 A.H.) limited himself almost entirely to the Traditions which he found in Medina, relating more especially to the practice which prevailed there. As such his system of jurisprudence is based entirely on the Traditions and practices of the people of Medina. He was scrupulously careful in giving judgement.



The third, Imam Abu Abd allah Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, took immense pains in studying the Traditions, travelling from place to place in search of information. He was intimately acquainted with the Hanifi and Maliki systems, but that which he himself founded was based largely on Traditions. Over the Maliki system which is also based on Traditions, it had the advantage that the Traditions made use of by Shafi'i were more extensive, and were collected from 'different centres, while Imam Malik contented himself only with what he found at Medina.

The last of the four great Imams, was Ahmad ibn Hanbal who too made a very extensive study of Traditions and made very little use of reasoning as he depended almost entirely on Traditions.

It was not only in the religious field that marked progress was made. The Abbasid period is noted for intellectual awakening in all fields of knowledge. It witnessed the most momentous intellectual awakening in the history of Islam and one of the most significant in the whole history of thought and culture.

The host of literatures and savants who flourished during this long period directed their minds to every branch of human study. They wrote on grammar, belles letters, rhetoric, philology, geography, the Traditions, and travels; they compiled lexicons and biographies, and enriched the world with thoughtful histories and beautiful poetry: they added to the sum total of human knowledge by their discoveries in science, and gave an impetus to the movement of thought by their philosophical discussions.

When we consider the immense range over which the Muslim Arabs exercised their intellect from the eighth to the thirteenth century of the Christian era, the estimate of the thoughtful historian, Sedillot can scarcely be said to be exaggerated. He says; "The vast literature which existed during this period, the multifarious production of genius, the precious inventions; all of which attest a marvellous activity of intellect, justify the opinion that the Arabs were our masters in everything. They furnished us, on the one hand, with inestimable materials for the history of the Middle Ages with travels, with the happy idea of biographical dictionaries; on the other, an industry without equal, architecture, magnificent in execution and thought, and important discoveries in art".



The intellectual activities of these early Muslims are generally classified into two groups: firstly, activities evoked by the predilections of the Arab's genius—namely theology, jurisprudence, philosophy and history and secondly, activities evoked by an instinctive human desire for knowledge, which are philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, medicine, natural science, literature and geography. Impelled by the immediate necessity of building up a gigantic socio-political order for the Muslimdom in accordance with the principles of the Holy Quran and the Prophetic tradition, the Muslim scholars at first addressed themselves to the first group of subjects, in which they attained a distinctive greatness. But the fabulous prosperity of Baghdad brought in its train also the need for enjoyment; the love of beauty and, as Joseph Hell says, the noblest and highest of all the craving for knowledge, the search after truth. Indeed for the Muslims all knowledge was sacred, a gift of God and in it nothing was profane. It, therefore, goes to the credit of Islam, that it neither slighted nor ignored the second group of subjects, but, as Joseph Hell further adds, "it offered the very same home to them as it did to theology—a place in the mosque. This leads us to a consideration of the system of education that was prevalent under the Abbasid rule.

#### Education System :

Early in the time of the pious Caliphs schools were established in different parts of Arabia as well as in the conquered provinces for teaching the Holy Quran. The later curriculum included also grammar and caligraphy. Under the Abbasids, these elementary schools were generally housed in prominent mosques, spread like a network throughout the Caliphate. Demands for learning had become so universal that even without any initiative of the state, a sort of compulsory school system grew up. Boys and girls usually joined these schools at the age of six and the teachers were paid by the community.

As a logical development of the intellectual activities, there also sprang up several universities in important cities of the empire such as Basrah, Kufah, Demascus, Baghdad, Nayshapur, Herran, Marv etc. It is generally recognised that until the eleventh century



of the Christian era principal seats of the universities were the mosques which ensured perfect freedom to the teachers to express their views on the one hand and the facility of free admission to every Muslim on the other. This public character of teaching coupled with the fact that no reliance was put on the diploma or formal certificates but on the personal competence of the teacher and his mastery over the subject taught, ensured to a great extent a high standard of learning.

Judging from whatever information has come down to us, the method of teaching at these universities appear to have been of a "Seminar" type which is presently gaining popularity in Western countries. This point can be best illustrated by the following quotation from the *Arab Civilization* of Joseph Hell, who observes :

"And to these lectures came not inquisitive ignoramuses but Muslim savants from all parts of the empire. It was open to any member of the audience to question the lecturer, and a lecturer unable to explain the point raised or to satisfy the questioner was forthwith disgraced and discredited. Every teacher had his fixed days and hours. On the other hand, there was no time-limit to the lectures. It rested entirely with the lecturer to fix the number of lectures on any given subject...The lecture was usually based on a treatise composed either by the lecturer himself or by another. The lecture delivered slowly, was taken down by the audience.

"By means of questions occasionally thrown out, the lecturer ascertained whether he was being followed or not. At times, he stopped down among the audience to discuss the subject with them,"

In matters of teaching sciences what especially distinguished the Muslim scholars were the emphasis on observation *i.e.* the "scientific spirit" par excellence. As testified by Sedillot, what characterised the school of Baghdad from its inception was its scientific spirit, *i.e.*, (i) proceeding from the known to the unknown, (ii) taking precise account of celestial phenomena, (iii) accepting nothing as true which is not confirmed by experience or established principles", says he, "taught and acclaimed by the then masters of the science."



Until the eleventh century A.D. when regular academies were established by the princes, the teachers were left to earn their own living usually by appointment as judges of the courts or by carrying on trade or craft. In the academies teachers received salaries. There was, however, arrangement for copyright which often put the teachers into considerable difficulty, as no one was allowed to use the book of another at a public lecture without written permission. Even after the death of the author the copyright lay with his heirs whose permission was required for its utilisation. But far from being an impediment to learning, it stimulated original thinking and ever-fresher scholarship.

In order to have a correct estimate of the cultural attainments during the period under review, a short resume of the literary and scientific activities of some of the outstanding scholars on some important branches of humanities is necessary.

#### **History :**

Archaeology and Ethnology were included in history, and great minds applied themselves to the pursuit of this interesting branch of study. Baladhari, one of the most reputed historians, was born at Baghdad where he lived and worked. His history of the conquest is written in admirable style, and marks a distinct advance of the historical spirit. It is, however, in the monumental works of Tabari, of Masudi and Ibn al-Athir that we see the full activity of the Muslim mind during this period. Like their successors, these men were encyclopaedists, philosophers, mathematicians, geographers, as well as historians.

Tabari (Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir) who died in Baghdad in 922 A.D. brought his work down to the year 302 A.H./914 A.D. His fame rests on his remarkably elaborate and accurate history, *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* (Annals of the Apostles and Kings) as well as on his commentary of the Quran. His commentary became a standard work upon which later Quranic commentators drew. His monumental work on universal history, the first complete one in Arabic, likewise served as a source for later historians. An idea of his industry and enthusiasm for learning may be gained from the



popular tradition that during forty years al-Tabari wrote forty sheets every day.

Abu al-Hassan Ali al Masudi, (d. 956) inaugurated among the Arabs the topical method of writing history. Instead of grouping his events around years, he grouped them around dynasties, kings, and peoples. Arabic historical composition reached its highest point in al-Tabari and al-Masudi and Ibn Miskawayh (1030). In appreciating their works in this and other disciplines Sarton declares: "The main task of mankind was accomplished by Muslims. The greatest philosopher al-Farabi, was a Muslim; the greatest Mathematicians, Abu Kamil and Ibrahim ibn Sinan were Muslims; the greatest geographer and encyclopaedist, al-Masudi, was a Muslim; the greatest historian al-Tabari, was still a Muslim."

#### Geography :

The institution of the holy pilgrimage, the orientation of the mosques towards Mecca and the need for determining the direction of the Ka'bah at the time of prayer gave religious impetus to the Muslims to study Geography. Astrology, which necessitated the determining of the latitudes and longitudes of all places throughout the world, added its scientific influence. Muslim traders between the seventh and ninth centuries reached China on the east both by sea and by land, attained the island of Zanzibar and farthest coasts of Africa on the south, penetrated into Russia on the north and were checked in their advance westward only by the dreaded waters of the sea of Darkness (Atlantic).

Ptolemy's Geography was translated into Arabic either directly or through Syriac several times. With this as a model the celebrated Khwarizmi composed his *Surat al-Ard* (Image of the Earth), which served as a basis for later works and stimulated geographical studies and composition of original treatises. Al-Khwarizmi's work was accompanied by an image of the earth, a map executed by him and sixty-nine other scholars under the patronage of al-Mamun, which is the first map of the heavens and the earth in Islam.

The first independent geographical treatises in Arabic took the form of road books in which itineraries occupied a prominent place.



Ibn Khurdadhbih (912), director of the post and intelligence service in al-Jibal, initiated the series with his *Masalik al-Mamalik*. This work especially valuable for its historical topography, was used by ibn al-Faqih, ibn Hawqal, al-Maqdisi and later geographical writers.

The great systematic geographers of the Arabs do not make their appearance until the advent of al-Istakhri, ibn Hauqal, and al-Maqdisi in the middle of the fourth Muslim century. Al-Istakhri flourished about 950 A.D. and produced his *Masalik al-Mamalik* with coloured maps for each country. Al-Maqdisi visited all the Muslim lands except Spain, Sijistan and India and in 985 A.D. embodied an account of his twenty years of travel in a delightful work, *Ahsan al-Qaqazim fi Ma'rifat al-Awalim* (The Best Classification for knowledge of Regions), which contains much valuable and fresh information.

Before the close of the Abbasid age lived the greatest of Eastern Muslim geographers, Yaqt ibn Abdullah al-Manawi (1179-1229), author of the often-cited geographical dictionary; *Mu'jam al-Buldan*. The first draft of his geographical dictionary was drawn at al-Mawsil in 1224 and the final redaction was completed in 1228 at Aleppo. This *Mu'jam*, in which names of places are alphabetically arranged, is a vertiable encyclopaedia, containing, in addition to the whole fund of geographical knowledge of the age, valuable information on history, ethnography and natural science.

Literary geography of the Muslims is said to have left no direct impression on European medieval thought, as the works of these geographers found no translators into Latin. Certain aspects of astronomical geography, including an approximately correct theory of the causation of tides, worked out by Abu-Mashar, and of the length of the terrestrial degree, did find their way into the West, the latter through a translation of al-Farghani's work on astronomy. Likewise fragments of the geographical lore of the Greeks as exemplified by Aristotle, and Ptolemy were reintroduced to the West through the Arabs. The primary interest of Latin Occident in Arabic books had for its object the preparation of calendars, star tables and horoscopes and the interpretation of the



hidden meaning in the words of the scriptures through commentaries on Aristotle. The bulk of this scientific material, whether astronomical, astrological or geographical, penetrated the West through Spanish and Sicilian channels.

#### Philosophy :

To the Arabs philosophy was a knowledge of the true causes of things as they really are in so far as it is possible to ascertain them by human faculties. In essence their philosophy was Greek, modified by the thought of the conquered peoples and by other Eastern influences, adapted to the mental proclivities of Islam and expressed through the medium of Arabic.

The greatest names in the field of early Arab Philosophy are those of al-Kindi, al-Farabi and Ibn Sina.

Abu Yousuf Yakub ibn Ishaq al-Kidni, born in Kufah about the middle of the ninth century, flourished in Baghdad. Al-Kindi was more than a philosopher. He was astrologer, alchemist, optician and music theorist. No less than two hundred and sixty five works are ascribed to him but most of them have been lost. His principal work on geometrical and physiological topics, based on the Optics of Euclid on Theon's recension, was widely used in both East and West until superseded by the greater work of Ibn al-Haytham. In its Latin translation, *De Aspectibus*, it influenced Roger Bacon.

The harmonization of Greek philosophy with Islam begun by al-Kindi, an Arab, was continued by al-Farabi, a Turk, and completed in the East by Ibn Sina, a Persian.

Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Yarkhan abu Nasr al-Farabi, born in Transoxiana flourished as a Sufi at Aleppo in the brilliant court of Sayf al-Dawlah al-Hamdani. He died at Damascus in 950 A.D. His system of philosophy was a syncretism of Platonism, Aristotelianism and Sufism that won him the enviable title of the second teacher. Besides a number of commentaries on Aristotle and other Greek philosophers, al-Farabi composed various psychological, political and metaphysical works, of which the best known



are the *Risalah fi Ara Ahl al-Madinah al-Fadilah* (Epistle on the Opinions of the people of the Superior City). In the latter and in his *al-Siyasah al-Madaniyah* (Political Economy), he presents his conception of model city, which he conceives as a hierarchical organism analogous to human body. The sovereign, who corresponds to the heart, is served by functionaries who are themselves served by others still lower. In his ideal city the object of association is the happiness of its citizens, and the sovereign is perfect, morally as well as intellectually.

Al-Farabi's other writings reveal him as a physician and mathematician, an occult scientist and an excellent musician. In the presence of his patron Sayf al-Dawlah he is said to have been able to play his flute so as to cast his hearers into a fit of laughter, draw tears from their eyes or set them all asleep including even the door-keepers.

After al-Farabi, it was Ibn Sina (1073) who contributed the most important works in Arabic on the theory of music. Ibn Sina was indebted to al-Farabi in his Philosophical views. In the judgement of Ibn Khallikan, no Muslim ever reached in the philosophical sciences the same rank as al-Farabi; and it was by the study of his writings and by the imitation of his style that Ibn Sina attained proficiency and his own work was rendered so useful. It was Ibn Sina, however who placed the sum total of Greek wisdom codified by his own ingenuity, at the disposal of the educated Muslim world in an intelligible form. Through him the Greek System, particularly that of Philo, was rendered capable of incorporation with Islam.

About the middle of the fourth Muslim century there flourished in al-Basrah an interesting eclectic school of popular philosophy known as *Ikhwan al-Safa* (The Brethren of Sincerity). The *Ikhwan*, who had a branch in Baghdad, formed not only a philosophical but also a religio-political association with ultra-Shiite, probably Ismail'ite, views and were opposed to the existing political order, which they evidently aimed to overthrow by undermining the popular intellectual system and religious beliefs. A collection of their epistles, *Rasail* arranged in encyclopaedic fashion survives, bearing some



obscure names as collaborators. The epistles number fifty two and treat of mathematics, astronomy, geography, music, ethics, philosophy, embodying the sum total of knowledge that cultured men of that age were supposed to acquire. The first fifty one epistles lead up to the last, which is a summation of all sciences. The language of the epistles shows that Arabic had by that time become an adequate medium for expressing scientific thought in all its aspects.

#### Al-Ghazzali :

Abu Hamid al-Gazzali, born in 1058 in Tus, Khurasan, where he died in 1111, was unquestionably the greatest theologian-philosopher of Islam and one of its noblest and most original thinkers. It was al-Ghazzali who fixed the ultimate form of the Ash'ariyah school of theology and established its dicta as the universal creed of Islam. This father of the church in Islam has since become the final authority for Sunnite orthodoxy. He reproduced in his religious experience all the spiritual phases developed by Islam.

Starting his religious life as an orthodox, al-Ghazzali soon turned Sufi, and when still under twenty he had broken with all the past. In 1091 he was appointed lecturer at the Nizamiyah in Baghdad where he became sceptic. Four years later he turned to Sufism after a terrific spiritual struggle that left him a physical wreck. Intellectualism had failed him. After about twelve years of retirement in various places, he returned to Baghdad to preach and teach. There he composed his masterpiece *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din* (Revivification of the Sciences of Religion). The mysticism of this work vitalized the law and its orthodoxy leavened the doctrines of Islam. In it and in such other works of his as *Fatihah al-Ulum*, *Tahafut-al-Falasifah*, *al-Iqtisad fi al-I'tiqad*, orthodox speculation reached its culminating point. These works deposed Fiqh from the high rank it had usurped, employed Greek dialectic to found a pragmatic system and made philosophy palatable to the orthodox theologians. Partly translated into Latin before 1150, the works of al-Ghazzali exerted marked influence on Jewish and Christian scholasticism. Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest theologians of Christianity, and later Pascal, were deeply influenced by the ideas of al Ghazzali.



### Medicine :

Arab interest in the curative science had been stimulated by the Prophetic tradition which had made science two-fold : theology and medicine. The physician was at the same time metaphysician, philosopher and sage, and the title hakim was indifferently applied to him in all these capacities.

In the curative use of drugs some remarkable advances were made at this time by the Arabs. It was they who established the first apothecary shops, founded the earliest school of pharmacy and produced the first pharmacopoeia. Several pharmacological treatises were composed, beginning with those of the world famed Jabir ibn Hayyan, the father of Arabic alchemy, who flourished about 776 A.D.

Under the orders of al-Muqtadir's vizir Ali ibn Isa, Sinan organised a staff of physicians who would go from place to place carrying drugs and administering relief to ailing people. Other physicians made daily visits to jails. Such facts show an intelligent interest in public hygiene unknown to the rest of the world at that time. In his efforts to raise the scientific standard of the medical profession and in his efficient administration of the Baghdad hospital lay Sinan's chief title to fame. This hospital, the first in Islam, was created by Harun al-Rashid in the beginning of the ninth century. Not long afterwards other hospitals to the number of thirty four grew up throughout the Muslim world. Travelling clinics made their appearance in the eleventh century. Muslim hospitals had special wards for women and each had its own dispensary. Some were equipped with medical libraries and offered courses in medicine.

The most notable medical authors were Persian in nationality but Arab in language. Ali al-Tabari, al-Razi, Ali ibn al-Abbas Al-Majusi, and Ibn Sina. The portraits of two of these, al-Razi and Ibn Sina, adorn the great hall of the Schools of Medicine at the University of Paris.

Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi (Rhazes, 865-925) was probably the greatest and most original of all the Muslim



physicians, and one of the most prolific writer. He is also considered the inventor of the section in surgery. The Fihrist lists one hundred and thirteen major and twenty eight minor works by al-Razi, of which twelve deal with alchemy. One of his principal works on alchemy, the Kitab al-Asrar, after having passed through numerous editorial hands was rendered into Latin by the eminent translator Gerard of Cremona (d.1187) and became a chief source of chemical knowledge until superseded in the fourteenth century by Jabir's (Geber's) works. Under the title *De Spiritibus et Corporibus* it was quoted by Roger Bacon. While still in Persia al-Razi wrote for Mansur ibn Ishaq al-Samani of Sijistan a monumental work in ten volumes, named after his patron *Kitab al-Mansuri*, of which a Latin translation was first published in Milan in the eighties of the fifteenth century. Parts of it have been recently done into French and German. Of his monographs one of the best known is a treatise on smallpox and measles, the earliest of its kind and rightly considered an ornament to the medical literature of the Arabs. In it we find the first clinical account of small pox. Translated into Latin in Venice (1565) and later into several other languages, this treatise served to establish al-Razi's reputation as one of the keenest original thinkers and greatest clinicians not only of Islam but of the Middle Ages. His most important work, however, was *al-Hawi* (The Comprehensive Book), first translated into Latin under the auspices of Charles of Anjou by the Sicilian Jewish physician Faraj bin Salim in 1279. Under the title 'Continet' it was repeatedly printed from 1486 onwards, a fifth edition appearing in Venice in 1542. As the name indicates, this book was meant to be encyclopaedic in its range of medical information. It sums up the knowledge the Arabs possessed at that time of Greek, Persian and Hindu medicine and adds some fresh contributions. Printed when printing was still in its infancy, these medical works of al-Razi exercised for centuries a remarkable influence over the minds of the Latin West.

The most illustrious name in Arabic medical annals after al-Razi's is that of Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980-1037) called by the Arabs "al-Shaikh al-Rais", the sheikh and prince of the learned. Al-Razi was more of a philosopher. In this physician, philosopher,



philologist and poet, Arab science culminated and is, one might say, incarnated,

Abu Ali al-Husayn, to use his first name, was the son of an Ismaili, Abdullah. Born near Bukhara, he spent all his life in the eastern part of the Muslim world and was buried in Hamadan, where his grave is still shown. As a youngman he had the good fortune to cure the Samanid sultan of Bukhara, Nuh ibn Mansur (976-97) and was therefore given the privilege of using the ruler's remarkable library. Endowed with extraordinary powers of absorbing and retaining knowledge this Persian scholar devoured the contents of his royal master's library and at the early age of twenty one was in a position to embark on his career of writing. Al-Qifti lists only twenty one major and twenty four minor works of Ibn Sina; other titles swell the total to ninety nine, dealing with philosophy, medicine, geometry, astronomy, theology, philology and arts. Among his scientific works the leading two are the Kitab al-Shifa (The book of Healing), philosophical encyclopaedia based upon the Aristotelian and al-Qanun fi al-Tibb, which represents the final codification of Greco-Arabic Medical thought. Arabic text of the Qanun was published in Rome in 1593. Translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona in the twelfth century, this Canon, with its encyclopaedic contents, its systematic arrangement and philosophic plan, soon worked its way into a position of pre-eminence in the Medical literature of the age, displacing the works of Galen, al-Razi and al-Majusi and becoming the text book for medical education in the schools of Europe. In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century it passed through fifteen Latin editions and one Hebrew. In recent years a partial translation into English was made. The book distinguished mediastinitis from pleurisy and recognizes the contagious nature of phthisis and the spreading of diseases by water and soil. It gives a scientific diagnosis of ankylostomiasis and attributes it to an intestinal worm. Its materia medica considers some seven hundred and sixty drugs. From the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries this work served as the chief guide to medical science in the west and it is still in occasional use in the Muslim East. In the words of Dr. Osler it has remained a Medical bible for a longer period than any other work.



**Al-Biruni :**

At Ghaznah (Afghanistan), lived Abu al-Rayhan Muhammed ibn Ahmed al-Biruni (973-1048), considered the most original and profound scholar Islam has produced in the domain of natural science. Here this Arabic author of Persian origin, who spoke Turkish and knew besides Persian, Sanskrit, Hebrew and Syriac produced in 1030 an account of the science of astronomy entitled *al-Qaiun al Ma'sudi fi al-Gay'an* was *al-Nujum*. In the same year he composed a short catechism of geometry, arithmetic astronomy and astrology entitled *al-Tafhim la Awail al-Tanjim*. His first work was *al-Athar al-Baqiyah an al-Qurun al-Khaliyah*, dealing chiefly with the calendars and eras of ancient peoples. In these works al-Biruni discusses intelligently the then debatable theory of the earth's rotation on its axis and makes accurate determination of latitudes and longitudes. Among his scientific contributions are an explanation of the working of natural springs by the hydrostatic principle, the suggestion that the Indus valley must have been on ancient sea basin filled up with alluvium, and the description of several Monstrosities, including what we call Siamese twins.

Of the Saljuq Sultans, Jalal al-Din Malikshah patronised astronomical studies. He established in 1074 at al-Rayy or at Naysapur an observatory where there was introduced into the civil calendar an important reform based on an accurate determination of the length of the tropical year. To this task of reforming the old Persian Calender he called to his new observatory the celebrated Umar al-Khayyam. Born between 1038 and 1048 at Naysapur where he died in 1123. Umar is known to the world primarily as a poet and free thinker, and very few realize that he was a first class mathematician and astronomer as well. The researches of al-Khayyam and his patron al-Tarikh al-Jalali, which even more accurate than the Gregorian calendar. The latter leads to an error of one day in 3330 years, whereas al-Khayyam's apparently leads to an error of one in about 5000 years.

**Astronomy and Mathematics:**

The scientific study of astronomy in Islam was begun under the influence of an Indian work, the *Siddhanta* brought to Baghdad



(771) translated by Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Fazari and used as a model by later scholars. Pahlawi tables compiled in the Sasanid period were soon added in translated form. Greek elements, last in order of time, were first in importance. An early translation of Ptolemy's *Almagest* was followed by two superior ones ; the one by al-Hajjaj ibn Matar completed in 212 A. H. (827-28) and the other by Hunayn ibn Ishaq, revised by Tabit ibn Qurrah (911). Early in the Ninth century the first regular observations with fairly accurate instruments were made in Jundaysapur in south west Persia. In connection with his *Bayt al-Hikmah*, al-Mamun created at Baghdad an astronomical observatory under the directorship of Sin ibn Ali and Yahya ibn abi Munsur (830). Here the Caliph's astronomers not only made systematic observation of the celestial movements, but also verified with remarkably precise results all the fundamental elements of the *Almagest* ; the obliquity of the ecliptic, the precession of the equinoxes, the length of the solar year, etc.

Al-Mamun's astronomers performed one of the most delicate geodetic operations-measuring of the length of a terrestrial degree. The object was to determine the size of the earth and its circumference on the assumption that the earth was round.

Between 877 and 918 Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Jabir al-Battani (Albatenius) unquestionably the greatest astronomer of his time and one of the greatest in Islam, made his observations and studies in al-Raqqah. Al-Battani was an original research scholar. He made several emendations to Ptolemy and rectified the calculations for the orbits of the moon and certain planets. He proved the possibility of annular eclipses of the sun and determined with greater accuracy the obliquity of the ecliptic the length of the tropical years and the seasons and the true mean orbit of the sun.

#### **Astrology :**

In astrology, a handmaid of astronomy abu Mashar (886) who flourished at Baghdad, was the most distinguished figure. He is the one most frequently cited as an authority in the Christian Middle Ages and under the name Albumasar figured as a prophet in the incognography. Four of his works translated into Latin in the twelfth century by John of Seville and Adelard of Bath, Abu



Mashar communicated to Europe the laws of the tides, which in a treatise he explained on the basis of the relation to the moon's rise and setting.

#### **The Arabic Numerals :**

The same Hindu scholar who brought to the court al-Mansur the astronomical work Sindhind is credited with having also introduced Hindu arithmeticallore with its numeral system and the zero. Al-Fazari's translation of the Hindu works was therefore responsible for the development of the Arabic Numerals, which introduced in Europe through Spain and Sicily made the progress of modern mathematical Science possible.

#### **Al-Khwarizmi :**

Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi (780-850) was the principal figure in the early history of Arabic mathematics. One of the greatest scientific minds, he influenced mathematical thought to a greater extent than any other medieval writer. Apart from compiling the oldest astronomical tables, al-Khwarizmi composed the oldest work on Arithmetic and algebra, *Hisab al-Jabr wa al-Muqabalah* (calculation of integration and equation), presented through over eight hundred examples, was his chief work, but was lost in Arabic. Translated in the twelfth century into Latin by Gerard of Cremona; this work of al-Khwarizmi was used until the sixteenth century as the principal mathematical text book of European universities and served to introduce into Europe the science of Algebra, and with it the name. Al-Khwarizmi's works were also responsible for the introduction into the West the Arabic numerals called *Algoisms* after him.

#### **Alcemy :**

After materia medica, astronomy and mathematics, the Arabs made their greatest scientific contribution in Chemistry. In the study of Chemistry and other physical sciences the Arabs introduced the objective experiment, a decided improvement over the hazy speculation of the Greeks. Accurate in the observation of phenomena and diligent in the accumulation of facts, the Arabs nevertheless found it difficult to project proper hypothesis. To draw truly scientific conclusion and elaborate a final system was the weakest point in their intellectual armour.



The father of Arabic alchemy was Jabir ibn-Hayyan (Geber) who flourished in al-Kufah about 776. His name after that of al-Razi (925) is the greatest in the field of medieval chemical. Like his Egyptian and Greek forerunners, Jabir acted on the assumption that base metals such as tin, lead, iron and copper could be transmuted into gold or silver by means of a mysterious substance. He more clearly recognized and stated the importance of experimentation than any other early alchemist and made noteworthy advance in both the theory and practice of chemistry. Jabir described scientifically the two principal operations of chemistry, calcination and reduction. He improved on the methods for evaporation, sublimation, melting and crystallization. In general Jabir modified the aristotelian theory of the constituents of metal in a way that survived with slight alterations, until the beginning of modern chemistry in the eighteenth century.

Before we conclude, it may be reminded that it was the Holy Prophet himself who sharpened the zeal of his followers to seek knowledge. He is reported to have said :

“Seek knowledge even if you have to go to China”.

“He who leaves his home in search of knowledge-walks in the path of God until his return home”.

“God makes easy the path of paradise to him who journeys for the sake of knowledge”.

The cultural activities of the Muslims, which were the direct result of this encouragement, begun in Madinah, Basra, Kufa, and Damacus during the Umayyad period, the cultural and intellectual activities came to fruition in the city of Baghdad under the enlightened Abbasid caliphs. One of the first Abbasid rulers, Mansur, had established a department of translation for rendering into Arabic books of science and learning from other languages. Under Caliph al-Mamun (813-833) translation began on a grand scale. Christians were sent to Byzantine Empire to find new books and Muslims, on their travels, searching for rare works. Books of sciences and philosophy were translated here by competent scholars



from Greek, Syria, Persian and Sanskrit into Arabic. Deeper studies in various fields of sciences and philosophy which logically followed were the flowers and fruits of this fresh initiative.

The gems of learning thus collected from different sources, were carefully examined and finally integrated into a wholesome tradition, which stood out for light amidst, deep and deepening darkness of the time and which was a beacon unto its own and for succeeding ages. What indeed distinguished the mentality of the Muslim scholars was the application of relentless criticism to the available data. Jabir Ibn Hayyan says, "It may be taken as an absolute rigorous principle that any proposition which is not supported by proofs is nothing more than an assertion which may be true or false. It is only when a man brings proofs of his assertion that we say, 'your proposition is true'. If borrowing from without led these Muslim scholars to the path of glory, it was their scientific spirit and the daring and courage to face—to accept nothing which was not supported by actually, in other words, to enthrone reason in the place of fancy, that made them truly great and made their game endure.

Apart from their contributions to philosophy, sciences and theology which have been noted above, it must also be said to the glory of these scholars that they succeeded for the first time in history in harmonising and reconciling the greatest Semitic contribution of monotheism with Greek rationalism, the highest contribution of the speculative thought. This prepared the way for equilibrium of thought in this respect which characterises the spirit of the present age.



## II

### MUSLIM SPAIN

The conquest of Spain by the Muslims in the beginning of the 8th century A. D. opened a glorious chapter in the history of Islam: The success of the expedition of Tariq ibn Ziyad, a lieutenant of General Musa ibn al-Nusair, was so dramatic and sweeping that the place of his first landing in 711 A. D. on the Spanish soil has been epitomised in the name of Gibraltar, or Jabal at-Tariq. Indeed, fired by the missionary zeal for spreading the wonderful religion of monotheism, universal justice, equality and brotherhood, the followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) proved a great conquering nation. Within a century of the Prophet's death, they carried the banners of Islam through North Africa and Spain right across the Pyrenees into the Southern France and through Persia, India (Sind) and Turkistan on the borders of China.

But the Prophet, as we have discussed earlier, had also enkindled in the hearts of his followers an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and a passionate love for truth which bore rich fruits in another direction. For, while the soldiers of Islam conquered lands after lands, including the seats of ancient civilization such as were in Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, and India (Sind), the scholars of Islam set themselves heart and soul to collecting the ancient lores of arts and sciences and in about another hundred years they succeeded in developing a glorious culture and civilization of their own, by synthesizing the Greco-Roman, Indian and Persian lores with Islamic ideals and values—a many-splendoured caricature of which has been preserved for us in the Arabian Nights. Hence, the carriers of Muslim arms were also the bearers of a gradually unfolding civilization which was destined to bring about a profound cultural revolution such as the world had never seen before. It was, therefore, Muslim scholarship which gave colour to the Muslim conquest and made their long presence in the fairest province of Europe from the 8th to the 15th century A. D. a matter of momentous significance.

Spain under Muslim rule for nearly eight centuries as Professor Hitti observes, "wrote one of the brightest chapter in the



intellectual history of medieval Europe. At the time of the conquest of Spain her cultural standard was so poor, and her general condition was so depressing, that the Muslims had little to learn there but a lot to teach. Europe itself being scourged by the barbarian Germanic races on the one hand and fleeced by the tyrannical nobles and priests on the other—had sunk very low ; so that centres of the learning of Greek philosophy and sciences had shifted long since to Syria and Persia and thereby the remnants of the invaluable Greek works were saved from the burning rage of the Christian priests. Naturally, the growing Muslim civilization was incubated in the East centring round the great city of Baghdad. During the first few hundred years culture of a high standard naturally flowed into Spain from the Muslim East. Poets, Musicians, Artists, theologians, Professors, Scientists and administrators were lured into Spain by the rich gifts and munificence of the kings and nobles. Muslim scholars of Spain, often under royal patronage, travelled to Madinah, Baghdad, Damascus and elsewhere in the East, even to Transoxiana and China in quest of learning. In the tenth century A. D. when Cordova (the Umayyad capital of Spain) began to rival Baghdad, the tide of the flow of culture and learning was turned. During the subsequent centuries increasingly more students from the Muslim East and the Christian Europe flocked at the Universities of Cordova, Toledo, Granada and Saville to drink deep from the wells of learning that flowed there in abundance. Specially, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the current of this flow became so strong that it overflowed Europe with newer amenities of life ranging from higher philosophy down to the playing of Chess, and, above all, with that scientific spirit of observation and research which set in motion those intellectual forces in Europe that were responsible for bringing about Renaissance and Reformation and for ultimately heralding our modern scientific age.

Spain had attained to the highest glory under the Umayyad rulers Abdur Rahman III (912—961) al-Hakam II (961—976) who styled themselves as Caliphs. At the time, their capital city Cordova shone like a brilliant light in the dark continent of Europe and with Baghdad and Constantinople it was reckoned with as one



of the three cultural centres of the world. The extent of its culture and prosperity can be gauged from the evidence of the contemporary historians Ibn Idhari and Maqqari that the city contained 1,13,000 homes, 21 suburbs, 70 libraries, numerous book shops, mosques and places and paved streets illuminated by lights from bordering houses. Besides, it also contained plenty of public baths in luxurious establishments. The University of Cordova, housed in the principal Mosque, was enlarged and beautified by al-Hakam who spent 2,61,537 dinars for the purpose. Its water supply was conducted through lead-pipes and its library contained 4,00,000 books. The University of Cordova rose to great fame as one of the most enligheened academies of the world and attracted students from near and far including many Christians of Europe. In addition, Hakam had also established 27 free schools in the city of Cordova. This was as a time when the people of Europe had not yet learnt the use of paper and looked upon bathing as a heathen custom. J. D. Draper remarks that even seven hundred years after this time there was not so much as one public lamp in London and centuries subsequently whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy day in Paris, stepped up to his ankles in mud.

The contributions of the Spanish Muslims towards intellectual progress, seientific research and cultural refinement were rated not only invaluable by the Muslims of the East but also proved as a potent factor for the advancement of human civilization. There is no dispute among the historians that from the 8th to the 13th century, the Arabic-speaking peoples were the torch bearers of culture and civilization throughout the world and after they reached their zenith their culture was transmitted to Europe mainly through the channels of Spain and Sicily which cast deep influence on almost every aspect of European life and thought. As a medium of this transmission Spain's role was also very significant.

#### **Poetry :**

It is well-known that poetry is a passion of the Arabs who rated chaste speech as the highest gift of God. Whereever the Arabs went or Arabic was spoken, there poetry naturally flourished. Spanish courts had always been lavish in patronising poets and men



of letters. The first Umayyad king Abdur Rahman I (756—788) was himself a poet and had the zest of planting a lovely date-palm and composing a verse comparing its position with that of his own. At a later time, petty rulers of Savilie boasted of the largest number graceful and inspired poets to be found in any other kingdom. Among the Spanish Muslim poets Abdul Walid Ahmad ibn Zaydun (1003—1071), Princes Walladah (d. 1087) are considered the greatest of all. These outlandish poets freed to some extent from the fetters of convention developed also new metrical form and finest romantic sensibility as it is manifest from their ballads and love-songs. Besides, they later developed an entirely new lyric system known as *Muwashshah* and *Zajal* which were based on a refrain from the chorus and were sung. These latter types earned the status of folk-song and were made widely popular by the travelling Minstrels. The Troubadours who flourished in the twelfth century closely imitated the *Zajal* singers. The very term "*Troubadour*" appears to have captioned from Arabic *Tarab* which means music and song. Another distinctive contribution of the Spanish and Arab poets was the introduction of the art of the expression of love in fantastic imagery.

#### Music :

In the smiling plains of Muslim Spain songs and music flourished even better than poetry. The Mausili school of music which represented a refinement of Perso-Arabic system was introduced in Spain as early as 822 A. D. by *Ziryab*, one of the greatest artists of the time and a student of Ishaq al-Mausili of Baghdad. The talented *Ziryab*, who besides being a wonderful vocalist, theorist and musician was also a historian, philosopher and scientist. By his song, music, narration of ancient lores, wise sayings and uncommon wit, he could keep his audience spell-bound for hours together. By dint of refineness of his manners and taste, he had become not only one of the foremost influential persons in the court of Abdur Rahman II but also a social model for the people. People took pride in imitating him in dressing, conversation, dining even down to the hair-cut. He established a school of music in Cordova which became the centre of this sweet art and after the model of



this school other musical school arose later on in Seville, Toledo, Valencia and Granada. Another master artist Ibn Finas (d. 888) who followed on the heels of Ziryab further popularised the Perso-Arabian traditions of music. Later on Greek and Pythagorean theories were also added to enrich the existing stock though Arabic translations in which philosophers like Ibn Bajjal (d. 1138) and Ibn Sab'in (d. 1269) played a prominent role. About the 10th century fine arts had become so characteristic of the Muslims of Spain that even kings and princes rivalled with common man in not only composing poetry and song but in also reciting and singing them. The Abbasid ruler of Saville, Mutamid (d. 1091) was a gifted poet, a singer and musician. For about three centuries since then, Spain had no equal in the world in the disciplines of sweet art.

The most outstanding contribution of the Muslim theorists was the development of *mensural music* that was introduced in Europe by Franco of Cologne in the twelfth century before which measured song was unknown to the West. Not less important was the conception of *gloss* or adornment of the melody and, as H. G. Farmer observes in *the Legacy of Islam*, "it was the type of *gloss* known as the *tarkib* or compound, which was the striking of a note simultaneously with its fourth, fifth or octave, that probably gave Europe its first prompting towards *harmony*", the basic modern characteristic of Western music. In its practical aspect the Muslim gifts to the West are undoubtedly largest and most conspicuous. In the first place, the West received a whole family of stringed instrument of the lute, pendore and guiter groups and secondly, the bowed instruments of various types. With the stringed instrument, there also came to Europe, according to above writer, "the places of the notes fixed on the finger-board by means of *fiet* or *farida* which were determined by measurement" whereas formerly the European minstrels only had cithara and harp among stringed instruments and were guided merely by their ears in tuning. It was again the Arabian lute or *al-'ud* perfected by the Spanish masters that led to the wonderful *musica ficta*. Aside from other influences, the above mentioned ones were sufficient to change the entire European conception of music and bring about a revolutionary advancement in this field.



**Scholars :**

Among numerous writers on literature, historiography and theology special mention may be made of Ali ibn Hazm (994-1064). Ibn Hazm is said to have written about 400 books on history, theology, Hadith, logic, poetry etc., and is considered as the greatest scholar and most original thinker of Spanish Islam. His most valuable work, *al-Fasl fi-l-Milal wa-l-Abwa wa-l-Nibal* on Religions and Sects has been considered as the first study on comparative religion. Ibn Khatib was a versatile scholar and wrote about 60 works on poetics, history, geography, philosophy and medicine. Ibn Khaldun has been classed as one of the greatest historians of all ages and was the first to attempt a philosophy of history, i.e. "a theory of historical development on the basis of climatic and geographic influences on the one hand and moral and spiritual forces at work on the other. His *Muqaddamah* or introduction (Prolegomena) to his voluminous work on history, in which he has advanced his philosophy of history has been rated as one of the finest works ever produced by man and on account of this, he is considered as the father of the science of sociology, and the real founder of social sciences.

**Sciences :**

Contribution of the Muslims of Spain towards sciences was also remarkable. Specially, in the field of botany, pure and applied, they had excelled their Eastern counterpart, and enriched the world by their painstaking researches. They collected plants in Spain and North Africa, gave them appropriate names in Arabic, Latin and Berber languages, classified them and made correct observation on even such sexual difference that exist between palms and helps. In his outstanding work on agriculture entitled *al-Filahah*, Abu Zakariya deals with 585 plants and explains the cultivation of over fifty fruit trees. The greatest Muslim botanist and pharmacist was Ibn Baytar (d. 1248) whose voluminous work *al-Jami-fit Adwiyat al-Muadah* on medicines has been considered as the most outstanding work from the time of Dioscorides down to the 16th century. It describes 1400 medical drugs including 200 novel plants that were not known before.



Some of the outstanding philosophers and historians of Spain such as Ibn Bajjah, Ibn Tufail Ibn Rushd and Ibn al-Khatib were also physicians and contributed substantially to the science of medicine. For instance, in a treatise on "black death" which was ravaging Europe during the 14th century, Ibn al-Khatib defended the theory of infection by contagion while the Christians of Europe stood helpless considering it as an act of God and ridiculed the Muslim theory as blasphemous. Ibn Rushd wrote a book entitled *kulliyat* or general theories on medicine and observed that no one is taken twice with small-pox and dealt accurately with the function of the

Among the professional physician Abul Qasim al-Zahrawi (d. 1013) and Ibn Zuhr (d. 1162) were the greatest. al-Zahrawi, known to Europe as Abulacasis, was a surgeon who exerted deep influence in laying the foundation of modern surgery. In his famous work *al-Tafsir li-man Ajaza an al-Ta'alif*, he introduced new ideas of Canterization of wounds, crushing a stone inside the bladder and emphasised on the necessity of vivisection and dissection. In its last section he also summed up the surgical knowledge of his time. The surgical part of this work was translated into Latin in the fifteenth century and various editions were published from Venice, Basel and Oxford, which was studied as a manual of surgery in European schools of medicine for centuries. As Professor Hitti observes, the illustration of instrument which it contained helped later scholars to lay the foundation of surgery in Europe.

Ibn Zuhr was a doctor of medicine, and was known to the Latin Christendom as Avenzoar. He was a contemporary of Ibn Rushd who considered him as the greatest physician since Galen. He wrote six books on medicine, therapeutics and diet of which there are still extant. He was the first person to discuss feeling in bones. His family is also reputed for having produced six generations of renowned physicians.

#### Philosophy :

The crowning achievement of Islam in Spain had, however, lain in the realm of philosophy. By an unusual coincidence, Spain produced a number of great philosophers in the twelfth century



such as Ibn Bajjah, Ibn Tufail, Rushd, Ibn Ibn Maymun and Ibn Arabi who exerted abiding influence equally on the East and the West and thus epitomised the century as a glorious chapter in the history of philosophic thought.

Ibn Bajjah (d. 1138) known to Europe as Avempace was a philosopher, scientist, physician and an expert on the art of music. He wrote several works on all the above subjects. He was a rationalist belonging to the Aristotelian school and emphasised that if man exercises his reason properly, he can arrive at the truth even unaided by revelation or any other external agency. This was precisely what his younger contemporary Ibn Tufail (d. 1185) proceeded to demonstrate in his famous philosophic romance *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, that how a wakeful boy reared under natural conditions away from human society discovers through the exercise of his in born intelligence the existence of a Supreme Being on whom everything depends for its existence. This delightful story was translated into Latin in 1671 and exerted considerable influence on the modern European conception of the "state of nature."

The greatest of all medieval philosopher was Ibn Rushd (d. 1198), more known to Europe as Averroes, whose commentaries on the philosophy of Aristotle ranked him only second to that great philosopher. The European scholars called him "the Commentator" as they called Aristotle, "the teacher". The main trend of his philosophy was directed towards reconciling religious faith with reason which exerted deep influence on the Christian and Jewish theology through St. Thomas Aquinas and Ibn Mayrum respectively. On the other hand, as a champion of rationalism, he stirred the minds of the European scholars so powerfully that the school of Averroism remained the dominant school of thought in the West from the end of the 12th to the end of 16th century and his influence is traceable in Descartes, Spinoza and Kant. Indeed, Averroism continued to be a living factor in European thought until the growth of the modern experimental science.

Last but not least was Mahiuddin ibn al Farabi (d. 1240), the greatest *Sufi* philosopher, whose influence on the Muslim world through his mystic philosophy was almost universal in the medieval



times and still continues to be a living factor among the *Pirs* and *Shykhs* of the mystic path. To the *Sufis* he is known as the *Shaykh al-Akbar* or the grand master. The influence of his philosophy of illumination is also manifest on such Christian scholastics as Duns Scotus, Roger Bacon and Raymond Wull as well on the great poet Dante.

In geography, astronomy and mathematics, the Spanish Muslims generally built upon their knowledge on the works of Eastern Muslim scholars, such as al-Khwarizmi, al-Maqdisi, al-Yakubi, Umar Khayyam. Nevertheless, in the person of Abu Abdullah al-Idrisi (d. 1166), Spain produced a brilliant geographer who flourished in the court of Roger II in Sicily. His monomental work *al-Nuzhat al-Mushtaq* was translated into Latin and Published from Paris in 1619.

#### **Paper :**

“The peculiarities of Moslem life with its lack of Political assemblies and theatres, which were characteristic features of Greece and Rome” as Professor Hitti aptly points out, “made books almost the sole means of acquiring knowledge”. At the height of their intellectual progress, Muslims, therefore, needed books more than anything else and mass production of books was made possible by the introduction of paper which they had acquired from China about the 8th century and thereafter locally manufactured everywhere in the Muslim world. Besides, reproducing copies of books by handwriting, the Muslim governments also used a form of block printing for official correspondence including those with European governments and their agents in Spain. Manufacture of writing papers and a crude idea of printing were the most beneficial gifts of Islam to Europe. Italy borrowed the art of paper making from Sicily and France from Spain in the later half of the 13th century and the English word “ream” derived through old French “rayme” and Spanish “resme” ultimately from the Arabic “rismah” which means a bundle—is still a living reminder thereof. It has often been pointed out by historians that without paper German invention of printing from movable type in the 15th century or the large-scale popular education in Europe, which led to renaissance and reformation would not have been feasible.



**Zero :**

Another Muslim gift to Europe was the mathematical "cipher" (from Arabic term *sifr*) or "zero", which the Arabs borrowed from India and introduced it into Europe along with Arabic numeral. The Christian Europe in the beginning of the 13th century marked the beginning of the European mathematics.

A third conspicuous example of indebtedness of the West towards Muslim scholarship is furnished in the field of geography. During middle Ages, when the Christian Europe believed in the flatness of the earth, the Muslims kept alive the doctrine of sphericity of earth. On the basis of the Hindu theories they had developed or "Summit" situated at an equal distance from the four cardinal points. This theory (known as the *arin* theory) was published in a Latin Work in 1410 A. D. It was on the basis of this doctrine that Columbus believed in the pear-shape of the earth and that on the western hemisphere opposite the "world cupola" was a corresponding elevated centre and it was, working on this theory, that he discovered America.

In astronomy a few branches of mathematics and chemistry which the Muslims had raised from the dust to the status of regular scientific disciplines, their immortal marks have been survived at least practically down to the present day. For instance, most of the names of stars, as we know today, are derived from Arabic terminology as is also the case with many fundamental technical notions, such as, Acrab from Arabic *aqrab* (scorpion), Algedi from *al-jadi* (the kid), Altair from *al-tair* (the flyer), Denab from *Zanab* (tail) and technical terms, such as, "azimuth" from Arabic *al-sumut*, "nadir" from *nazir*, and "zimuth" from *al-samt*. Likewise, algebra and trigonometry were substantially Muslim inventions which were transmitted to Europe through Spain and Sicily. In Chemistry, such familiar terms as "Julep" (ar :sharp or drink), alcohol, alembic, alkali and antimony are evidently the gifts of the Muslims.

Finally, it would not be out of place to note that the all-pervasive message of Islam had lain in the doctrine of monotheism which had always been the main spring of inspiration for its



followers. To their credit, the Muslim scholars left no stone unturned to set the doctrine of the unity of God and its corollary, the brotherhood of man finely and inalterably in the consciousness of man. It certainly goes to the credit of the Muslim scholars and, as Professor Hitti testifies, "to the eternal glory of medieval Islam that it succeeded for the first time in the history of human thought in harmonising and reconciling monotheism, the greatest contribution of the ancient Semitic world, with Greek philosophy, the greatest contribution of the ancient Indo-European world, thus leading the Christian Europe towards the modern point of view."

Thus, it is clear that what the West received from Islam through Spain and Sicily were not merely stray influence but the prints of a highly developed culture and civilization which cast deep and beneficial effects on almost every aspect of Western life and thought.

It is pity that our younger generations are not fully aware of the glorious heritage of Islam—a heritage which has unanimously contributed towards world culture and which is a living reality. Instead of looking to the east in the west, let the Muslim look into the heart of their own history and rule inspiration to build up a still more glorious future.







## INFLUENCES OF MUSLIM RULE IN INDIA

The history of Muslim rule in India dates back to 711 A. D. when Muslims landed at Debal, somewhere near the present city of Karachi—the capital of Pakistan, under Muhammad bin Qasim. Since then, save only for a short period of about two hundred years, they have enjoyed political supremacy throughout the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent upto 1749 A. D. With them they brought well developed political institutions, efficient methods of administration, a new culture and a philosophy of life hitherto unknown to this part of the world. Their rule is marked by its fertilising cultural effects on Indian soil. With the happy combination of all that was new and the rest that was old, every aspect of Indian society was revolutionised and a new chapter in the history of India was inaugurated.

The activities of the first Muslim invaders, the Arabs, were practically confined to the lower Indus regions—the Sind, more or less the outer fringe of the Indian political life and civilization. Yet their achievements were of no mean importance. A considerable number of people embraced Islam. India became known to the Muslim world, then expanding rapidly on all directions and the Muslim layer of civilization on Indian soil produced Sindhi language a mixture of Arabic and Sanskrit since then written in Arabic script. It is no less a historical incident than an inevitable result that the same province of Sind became the heart centre of the biggest Islamic state of Pakistan.

The movements of Ghaznavides from 1000 A.D. and Ghaurids from 1175 A. D. however had a far reaching effect. They opened the gates of India wide for the Muslims to enter, a process that eventually changed the political map of the sub-continent. These invaders penetrated deep into the heart of India and finally assumed the role of Empire-builders. The sovereign power shifted from Hindu rulers to the Muslim sultans who exercised it according to their own light and the circumstances of the time,



After the invasion of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna and Sultan Muizzuddin Mohammed Bin Sam of Ghor numerous Muslim men of learning and religion poured into India. It is beyond the scope of this paper to make a mention of all of them but some of the important ones who cannot be ignored are men like 'Ali bin Usman al-Hujwiri', a citizen of Ghazna, who settled down in Lahore, Sheikh Isma'il Bukhari who visited India in early eleventh century, Fariduddin 'Attar who came in twelfth century, Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti, very widely known as the saint of Ajmer, Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi who settled down in Bengal, Baba Farid at Pakpattan, (Punjab), Qutubuddin Bakhtiar who is buried at Delhi and score of others. These men of high rank in Muslim religious history lived and laboured in India. Through their incessant efforts, personal contact and influence, spread the Islamic philosophy throughout the length and breadth of Indo-Pakistan with the result that Islam became deeply ingrained in the socio-cultural and political life of the sub-continent.

India was conquered many a time prior to its conquest by Muslims. The Greeks, Scythians; Mongolians and Parthian invaders had a few generations of their settlement in this land. They had, however, been completely Hinduised in name, speech, manners, religion, dress and ideas. The Muslim conquest of India differed fundamentally from all preceeding invasions in one respect. Muslims came as a new element which the older inhabitants could not absorb. This was the cardinal difference between the Muslim settlement in India and all other foreign immigrations that had gone before it. Instead of getting sub-megred into the ocean of creeds and religious communities of this land, they unleashed sub-terranean forces and synthesized the old social, political, economic and cultural order with their own by their strongly monotheistic religious and socio-economic principles. The gifts of Muslim age to India are fabulous and unsurpassing.

#### **India Re-establishes Contact with the Outer World**

It was in the third century B. C. during early Budhistic age that India had established intimate contact with the outer Asiatic world. Its religious missionaries went far and wide upto Japan, Korea, East Indies in the East and Egypt and Bactria in the West.



Its traders settled in Malaya, Java, Sumatra and other islands now forming Indonesia. But the contact had been destroyed with the decline of Buddhism at home. By about eight century A. D. India became once again self centered and isolated from the moving world beyond her natural barriers. It was restored once again by the Muslim conquest at the end of the twelfth century. "Through the passes of the Afghan frontier the stream of population and trade flowed peacefully into India from Bokhara and Sumarkand, Balkh and Khurasan, Khwarizm and Persia, Afghanistan belonged to the ruler of Delhi, till near the end of the Moghul Empire. Through the Bolan Pass leading from India to Qandhar in South Afghanistan and thence to Persia, as many as 14,000 camel loads of merchandise passed every year in the reign of Jahangir, early in the 17th century. The ports of our western coast-Thatta, Broach, Surat, Chaul, Rajapur, Goa, and Karwar were so many doors between India and the outer world that could be reached by sea, as Arabia, Persia, Turkey, Egypt, Barbary; Abyessinia and even Zanzibar. From the eastern port of Masulipatan, belonging to the Sultans of Golkonda upto 1867 and thereafter to the Moghuls—ships used to sail for Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, Siam and even China—what Mohammadans began, the English have completed. Today India's isolation is finished and she has been switched on to the currents-economic, cultural and political, of the entire outer world."<sup>1</sup>

#### Government : Systematic and Uniform

The legal status of the Muslim empire in this sub-continent changed several times. When Arabs conquered Sind it was a part of the Umayyad Caliphate. With the establishment of the Ghaznavid rule over the Panjab and later during Sultanate of Delhi; they owed allegiance to the Abbasids. As the idea of an indivisible world of Islam witnessed its decline, a new school of thought grew up which believed that every independent monarch was Caliph within his own domain. This view seems to have been accepted by a few among the Sultans of Delhi like Qutubuddin Mubarak Shah, Alauddin Khilji and the Moghul Emperors who themselves claimed the status of Caliph within their empire.

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *Moghul Administration*.



Whatever might have been the legal status of the Muslim Empire in India during various stages of its life, it was always governed according to Muslim law. The Muslims believed in the supremacy of Divine law (Shar'iah) and hold that it is eternal and immutable in its essence. It is based on the Quran and the traditions of their Prophet. The Quran is believed by every Muslim to be the 'Word of God', revealed to their Prophet Mohammad. Not even the Prophet could change it. He could only explain and interpret it. The interpretations of the Prophet form the traditions which cannot be ignored by his followers. It is on these two rocks, the Quran and the traditions, that is built the structure of Islamic Law, the law was thus sovereign in Muslim lands. No one, not even a Sultan or an Emperor was above it. It is not only permitted but enjoined that a Muslim should disobey the ruler if the orders of the ruler violated the Law. Thus even the desire to see the sovereign in full enjoyment of his prestige and power, due to local factors did not imply unadulterated despotism. "Any attempt on the part of the monarch to interfere with institutions recognised by Muslim Law or to change arbitrarily well-established customs or dismiss men of recognized ability and loyalty was wrong. Such actions were as much resented as their due maintenance was appreciated."<sup>1</sup>

Muslim kingship in India, showed, on more than one occasion, promising signs of assuming a constitutional form. The Muslim theory of Government was constitutional and democratic in character. However, inspite of religious sanctions working as a strong lever for the establishment of a purely constitutional monarchy, the kingship in India could only rise upto benevolent monarchy and a sort of paternalistic rule, due to the peculiar set of circumstances prevailing in India. The Muslim rulers had to face serious military problems which required a strongly centralized Government to handle them successfully. Besides, a welding of the people was necessary before monarchy could be forged into a constitutional form.

1. Dr. Tripathi, **Some aspects of Muslim Administration**,



It may be noted, however, that a government in principle passed on a permanent law was deriving its authority from 'Ijma,' a preponderant concurrence of opinion on any point, was hitherto unknown to India. The Muslims have thus made a beginning of democracy in India.

As stated above, a welding of the people was the prime concern of the Muslim rulers. Previous to Muslims a major portion of the country was many times ruled by Hindu Rajas like Ashoka, Samdra Gupta, etc., but these Hindu Empires consisted of loosely united collections of independent provinces which did not acquire any homogeneity, nor create a sense of political unity or nationality among their people. Each province led its own life, continued its old familiar system of government and used its old local dialect. As against such a state of affairs in pre-Muslim Hindu period, the Muslim rule and particularly during "two hundred years of Mughul rule from the accession of Akbar to the death of Mohammad Shah (1556-1749) gave to the whole of Northern India and much of the Deccan also, oneness of the official language, administrative system and coinage and a popular lingua franca for all classes except the Hindu priests and the stationery village folk. Even outside the territory directly administered by the Moghul Emperors, the administrative system, official titles, court etiquette and monetary type were borrowed more or less, by the neighbouring Hindu Rajas."<sup>1</sup>

All the twenty provinces of the Moghul Empire were governed by means of exactly the same administrative machinery with exactly the same procedure and official titles. Persian was the official language used in all office record, farmans, grants and despatches. "The same monetary standard prevailed throughout the Empire, with coins having the same names, the same purity and the same denominations and differing only in the name of the mint town."<sup>2</sup> "The civil and military officials of the government were transferred from one province to another. The native of one province, subah, as it was

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *India through the Ages*.
2. J. Sarkar, *Moghul Administration*.



called, left at home in another province, and the traders passed easily from city to city and all realised, the imperial oneness of this vast country. Political unity and administrative uniformity were the legacy of the Muslim rule in India. India for the first time pulsed as a corporate whole.

#### **Impact of Islam on Hinduism and Indian Society**

The Hindu Indian society before the advent of Islam stood divided, fragmented and broken into watertight compartments. Under cast system, the society was divided into four classes of Brahmans—the priests, Khashtriyas—the soldiers and warriors, Vaishas—the traders and Sudras, the untouchables. The Brahman tyranny had grown to wildest limits and Sudras were leading a sub-human life. Under such conditions, the light of Islam appeared on the Indo-Pakistan horizon. It came with a message of universal brother-hood and heralded a new era in the religious and cultural life of India. The influence of Muslims who despised the sanctity of Brahmans and authoritatively proclaimed the unity of God, began gradually to operate, on the minds of the multitudes in India. The universality and dynamism of Muslim culture made a deep impression on a decadent and superficial society. It had a tremendous effect upon the evolution of Indian culture. The two movements that overcame all religious barriers fired the imagination of Hindus were 'monotheism' and "anti-castism". Both the movements were so penetrating that the decadent society succumbed to a new order of life. The Sufi doctrine of Muslims, which stands for all-consuming love for the Divine Being and the complete merger of the self in the existence of God, afforded a common platform for Hindus and Muslims to meet. Thus began a new movement in India known as Bhakti which stood for unity of God, Tasawwuf (Islamic mysticism) and universal brotherhood. Kabir, Dadu, Guru Nanak and Chaitanya gave rise to Bhakti movement and thus a neo-Hinduism was born under to the impact of Islam. A milder attitude to the laws of caste system was adopted and the saints of Bhakhti condemned caste system both by words and deeds.

"It is hardly possible to exaggerate the extent of Muslim influence on Indian life in all departments. But nowhere else is it shown



so vividly and so picturesquely, as in customs, in intimate details of domestic life, in music, in fashions of dress, in the ways of cooking, in ceremonials of marriage, in the celebration of festivals and fairs and in the courtly institutions and etiquette of Marathi, Rajput and Sikh princes.”<sup>1</sup>

Hunting, hawking and many other games became Mohammad-anised in method and terminology. Scores of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words have entered largely into Hindi, Bengali and other local and regional languages.

#### Art and Architecture

It has rightly been said that ‘the consciousness of a race changes organically in all parts together.’ Art is perhaps a more sensitive indication of change than even religion, for the former is objective whereas the latter is subjective in its nature.

The Hindu faith is intensely personal and individualistic. The Hindu architecture is the objectification of this character of faith. Its main symbols are mystery, and splendour of the deity. The Muslim consciousness is immensely different from that of the Hindu. He is neither personal nor individualistic. He is resigned to God and all his actions indicate collectivism. The transcendence and masterfulness of the reality, the abstractness of thinking, logical and grammatical, devotion to pure ideas, a quiet resignation, and a calm and dignified submission to divine will find expression in his buildings.

It was on the Indian soil that the two divergent mentalities clashed with each other and resulted in the evolution of a new architecture. The Hindu and Muslim elements coalesced to form a new type of architecture. India received a gift of which she can feel greatly proud of. The earliest Muslim contributions of distinction are Quwwatul Islam Mosque and Qutub Minar, both in Delhi and Qutub Minar was completed at a later stage. Alai Qarwan built by House-e-Khas a college building, Jahanpanah and scores

1. Dr. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*.



of other buildings were constructed during Sultanate. Every city which the Muslim armies occupied was adorned with mosque, palaces, tombs and other buildings belonging to the new Hindu—Muslim styles of architecture. The richest of Muslim architectural development is that of the Moghuls. Moghuls were great patrons of art and architecture. During their rule the architecture touched the peak of its glory. They used white marble in their buildings which added lustre to the glory of their buildings. Fatchpur Sikri, in Agra District, Red Fort and Jama Masjid at Delhi, the Fort of Agra, Badshahi Masjid, Jahangir's Tomb, and Shalamar Garden at Lahore are the marvel of the age. Above all is Taj Mahal—a dream in marble. It is a tomb on the bank of river Jamna at Agra constructed by Shahjahan as a monument to his wife Mumtaz Mahal, he himself is lying buried in the same tomb. Taj is the symbol of illustrious Moghul architecture par excellence. Its beauty of proportion knows no parallel in world history.

### Painting

Indian painting, Moghul or Rajput, is like Indian architecture. India is enormously indebted to Muslims for this art. There are three big centres of Indian painting, Ajanta, Delhi and Jaipur. Ajanta represents purely Hindu Paintings and whereas Delhi and Jaipur present the mixed school. The Persian and Central Asian influences are predominant in painting. It is a happy blending of Hindu and Muslim arts of painting.

### Historical Literature

Another gift of Muslims to India is historical literature. Among Hindus the sense of chronology was very imperfectly developed. It is strange that before the advent of Muslims, the Hindus produced no true history at all. In contrast to Hindus, Arabs were dry, methodical and matter of fact. Historiography has been the most favourite subject of the Arabs. There would have been no record of India's past, if Muslim historians had not recorded what they have done. A systematic, regular and reliable history of India begins only with the advent of Muslim rule,



### Growth of Vernacular Literature

Last, but not the least, was the growth of vernacular languages, Hindi and Urdu—the present national languages of India and Pakistan respectively. After the advent of Muslims the old Sanskrit lost its importance gradually. For a fairly long period the literary activities remained almost dead in Northern India but no sooner peace and good administration were established there was a sudden growth of vernacular literature in all the provinces. Muslims had freed the Hindu mind from the shackles of Sanskrit Classicism and patronised Hindi generously. The greatest early poets of Hindi are Malik Khusrau and Milk Mohammad Jaisi, both Muslims.

When Muslims conquered India and made it their home they spoke Persian. The daily contact with the indigenous people of the land gave rise to a new language what is now called Urdu. This new language evolved and developed with the expansion of Muslim influence. It gradually enveloped the whole of the sub-continent and became the *lingua franca* of India. The new vernacular languages, which have risen to the positions of national languages, are the fruit of peace and economic property under the Muslim rule in India.







## **“CONTRIBUTION OF ISLAM TO MODERN CIVILIZATION”**

If we compare to-day the Islamic world with Christendom, the former presents a dark and depressing picture of a society deeply-sunk in inertia and backwardness, and afflicted with intellectual and material bankruptcy. So dark and so disappointing is the general picture of the contemporary Muslim world that it is extremely difficult for the average westerner to believe that not many centuries ago it is this very area which was the centre of culture and enlightenment, and that in those days it is Europe which was the under-developed and benighted area of the world. Much more difficult it is for the average westerner to believe that it is none else but the Muslim who pulled Europe out of the darkness of its medieval barbarism, released those powerful forces—material as well as ideational—which led to the re-birth of Europe and played the basic role in the birth of modern civilization. Most of the people in the West would perhaps contemptuously brush aside such statements as obvious nonsense which need not even be considered seriously.

Such an attitude on the part of Westerners stems from the Western prejudice against Muslims and Islam which has its roots deep in history. But since the verdict of history does not take into consideration religious fanaticism and cultural bigotry, it goes squarely in favour of the conclusions we have briefly stated above.

Even the commonest student of world history knows that the Middle Ages (which are not inaptly designated as Dark Ages in the context of European history), were the ages of Islamic splendour and glory. In those days Muslims were far ahead of Christians in every walk of life and every aspect of their brilliant civilization presented a sharp contrast to the revolting state of affairs in Europe.

Christian Europe was under the iron grip of a fanatical, benighted and narrow-minded clergy. Hence we find all the treasures of ancient learning being destroyed in the name of Christ: The Greek and Roman manuscripts had been publicly burnt by the



priests. The library at Alexandria had been destroyed, for learning was for them a devil's snare. The Western Romans had completely succumbed to barbarism. The Eastern Roman Emperors kept their library and entertained some learned men, but within their palaces. Worldly joys, earthly pleasures, pagan learning, metaphysical discussions, were all abhorred under the influence of the bigotted priestcraft which regarded knowing too much as dangerous.

While this was taking place in Europe, history was witnessing an altogether different spectacle in the area under Muslim rule. In the Muslim world, the treasurers of intellectual culture were accounted by the rulers of Baghdad, Cairo, Delhi and Cordova the truest and proudest pomps of their courts. But it was not as a mere appendage of princely vanity that the wonderful growth of Islamic science and learning was fostered by their patronage. They pursued culture with the personal ardour of an overmastering craving. Never before and never since, on such a scale, has the spectacle been witnessed of the ruling classes throughout the length and breadth of a vast empire given entirely to a frenzied passion for the acquirement of knowledge. Learning seemed to have become with them the chief business of life. Chalifs and Amirs hurried from their diwans to close themselves in their libraries and observatories; they neglected their affairs of state to attend lectures and converse on mathematical problems with men of science; caravans laden with manuscripts and botanical specimens plied from Bokhara to the Tigris, from Egypt to Andalusia; embassies were sent to Constantinople and to India for the sole purpose of obtaining books and teachers; a collection of Greek authors or distinguished mathematician was eagerly demanded as the ransom of an empire. To every mosque was attached a school; wazirs vied with their masters in establishing public libraries, endowing colleges, founding bursaries for impecunious students. Men of learning, irrespective of race or religion, took precedence over all others; honours were showered upon them; they were appointed to the government of province, a retinue of professors and camel-train of books accompanied the Khalifs in their journeys and expeditions. In their educational



system the Muslims paid attention to all sciences, religious as well as secular. According to a European writer : "It was the glory of Islam that it gave to other sciences the same footing which it gave to the study of the Quran and the Hadith and Fiqh (that is, Muslim Jurisprudence), a place in the Mosque." Lectures on chemistry and physics, botany, medicine and astronomy were given in the mosque equally with lectures on Quran and Hadith for the mosque was the University of Islam in its great days and it deserved the name of university, since it welcomed to its precincts all the knowledge of the age from every quarter. The centre of Islamic culture in Europe, Spain, for nearly eight centuries set to all Europe a shining example of a civilized and enlightened state. Arts, literature and science prospered there as they then prospered nowhere in Europe. Students flocked from France, Germany and England to drink from the fountains of learning which flowed only in the cities of Andalusia.

The general tenor of life in the Islamic world too distinguished itself from European life by the fact that it was highly progressive and civilized. This contrast can be best gauged from the remarks made by Draper in his excellent work entitled, 'The Intellectual Development of Europe.' Turning his narrative to Muslim Spain he writes :

'From the barbarism of the people of Europe, who could scarcely be said to have emerged from the savage state, unclean in person, benighted in mind inhabiting huts in which it was a mark of wealth if there were bulrushes on the floor and straw mats against the wall; miserably fed on beans, vetches, roots, even the bark of trees : clad in garments of untanned skin, or at the best of leather of perennial durability, but not conducive to purity - a state in which the pomp of royalty was sufficiently and satisfactorily manifested in the equipage of the sovereign, an ox-cart, drawn by not less than two yoke of cattle, quickened in their movements by the goods of pedestrian serfs, whose legs were wrapped in wisps of straws ; from a people, devout believers in all the wild fictions of shrine-miracle and preposterous relics; from the degradation of a base theology, and from the



disputes of ambitious ecclesiasts for power, it is pleasant to turn to the south west corner of the continent, where under auspices of a very different kind, the irradiations of light were to break forth."

It is well known that Cordova, the Andalusian metropolis, had reached the zenith of culture and civilization. It had seventy libraries and nine hundred baths in a population of about one million. Its advanced stage of development is well illustrated by the fact that after sunset a man might walk through Cordova in a straight line for ten miles by the light of public lamps. Seven hundred years after this time there was not so much as one public lamp in London. The streets of Cordova were solidly paved. In Paris, centuries subsequently whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy does stepped upto his ankles in mud.

This being the contrast between medieval Islam and Christianity, would it not be proper to infer that it is the westward travel of civilization which forced Europe to liberate itself from the medieval moulds of its life and led to the birth of modern civilization? As against such a view, one may put forth the view that the Renaissance of Europe, which was the precursor of its modernity, was mainly the outcome of the revival of classical Greek learning and the role of Muslims was of little importance because of continued hostility between the Cross and the Crescent which precluded the possibility of Europe's learning much from the Muslims. In other words, Europe drew from it own and not from Islamic resources in building up the impressive civilization which is the pride and boast of the modern man. A more charitable view perhaps, could be to credit Muslims with some share in the Renaissance for the reason that they preserved the classical learning and made it available to Europe when it was ripe for benefitting from it.

A dispassionate study of history would, however, show that Muslims played a much more important role in building up modern civilization than is generally recognized. The origins of some of the basic features of modern civilization, its scientific advancement, its freedom from the bondage of ecclesiastical authority, its socio-political values like liberty, equality and fraternity,



are all traceable to Islamic sources since. Science occupies the place of primary and supreme importance in modern life, we shall mainly examine in the following paper the role of Islam in the promotion of the cause of science, which in our view is the greatest contribution of Muslims to the development of modern civilization.

The misunderstanding that generally hinders the recognition of truth in the minds of many people is that they consider the revival of Greek classics as the basic factor of the Renaissance and regard modern science as the child of Greek science. This, however is a highly exaggerated and false notion. It is based on a highly inadequate knowledge of historical development as well as on an erroneous appreciation of the nature of modern science. For science, which has been defined as "the ordered knowledge of natural phenomena and the relations between them" is based on observation and experiment. The hypothesis of science are formed on the basis of the observed facts, which when confirmed by criticism and experiment, are turned into Law of nature.

The first step towards scientific achievement, as we have seen, was the introduction of observation and experiment. It is this particular aspect which is markedly missing in what is inaptly termed as Greek 'science'. In fact the Greeks were over theoretical, and over abstract. They were primarily asking philosophical questions. Their minds were infected with an eager generality. They demanded clear, bold ideas, and strict reasoning from them. All that was excellent ; it was genius ; it was ideal preparatory work. But it was not 'science as we understand it.

The case of Aristotle who is regarded as the greatest Greek scientist offers a valuable illustration. His merit as a scientist consists merely in the collection and classification of facts in which he is unrivalled. His 'science' was, however, not based on observation and experiment. He never resorted to experiment which alone could justify the conclusions that he arrived at. Aristotle believed, for instance, that men had more teeth than women ; that bodies fall to the ground at rates proportional to their weight, etc. But it never occurred to him, that the teeth in the mouth of a woman could be counted and that the balls of different metals and



weight could be thrown from a height to see whether they fell below at the same time or one after the other. This resulted from the Greek's over-occupation with the abstract as against the concrete. In the words of Oswald Spengler :

The Greek did not stay his course for such base purposes as the careful investigation and collation of facts. He saw them and rushed to create by pure insight or philosophy a theory of the universe. The Greek throughout his culture, preferred abstract thought to the study of concrete facts. Almost careless of external facts the Greek was free to devote himself to the world of thought.

The role of Islam in human history is of revolutionary importance in so far as it led to revolt against Greek traditions, particularly against the over-speculative and over-abstract nature of Greek thought. The spirit of Quran was, as Iqbal has observed, anti-classical. It emphasized Nature and History as two important sources of Knowledge. It saw the signs of ultimate reality in the sun, the moon, the lengthening out of shadows, the alternation of day and night, variety of human colour and tongues, etc. In short, for purposes of knowledge Islam turned the gaze of Muslims on the concrete, the finite. For, in the words of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, "it is the intellectual capture of power over the concrete that makes it possible for the intellect to pass beyond the concrete." The Book of Islam produced a concrete spirit in the mind of Muslims as against the speculative spirit of ancient Greece, and the spirit created a revolt in the Muslim mind against the speculative thought which ignored all observation and experiment.

We may borrow from Iqbal in order to appreciate the basic change in outlook brought by Islam which led to the development of modern science and scientific spirit :

"This appeal to the concrete combined with the slow realization that, according to the teachings of the Quran, the universe is dynamic in its origin, finite and capable of increase, eventually brought Muslim thinkers into



conflict with Greek thought, which, in the beginning of their intellectual career, they had studied with so much enthusiasm. Not realizing that the spirit of the Quran was essentially anticlassical, and putting full confidence in Greek thinkers, their first impulse was to understand the Quran in the light of Greek philosophy. In view of the concrete spirit of the Quran, and the speculative nature of Greek philosophy which enjoyed theory and was neglectful of fact, this attempt was foredoomed to failure. And it is what follows this failure that brings out the real spirit of the culture of Islam and lays the foundation of modern culture in some of its most important aspects."

It is this Islamic revolt against Greek thought which gave birth to induction and thus arose the methods of observation and experiment—the basis of modern science. It is a colossal mistake to suppose that the experimental method is a European discovery. Though Europe has been rather slow to recognize the Islamic origin of her scientific method, recent European researches evidence a grasp of this essential point. Robert Briffault for instance, in his *Making of humanity* stresses the point repeatedly :

"Science is the most momentous contribution of Arab civilization to the modern world ; but its fruit were slow in ripening. Not until long after Moorish culture had sunk back into darkness did the giant to which it had given birth rise in his might. It was not science only which brought Europe back to life. Other and manifold influences from the civilization of Islam communicated its first glow to European life (p. 202)

"Although there is not a single aspect of European growth in which the decisive influence of Islamic Culture is not traceable, nowhere is it so clear and momentous as in the genesis of that power which constitutes the paramount distinctive force of the modern world, and the supreme source of its victory natural science and the scientific spirit." (p. 109).



He further stresses the point in these forceful terms ;

' The debt of our science to that of the Arabs does not consist in startling discoveries of revolutionary theories ; science owes a great deal more to Arab culture ; it owes its existence. The ancient world was pre-scientific. The Astronomy and Mathematics of the Greek were a foreign importation never thoroughly acclimatized in Greek Culture. The Greeks systematized, generalized, and theorized by the patient ways to investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation and experimental inquiry were altogether alien to the Greek temperament. Only in Hellenistic Alexandria was any approach to scientific work conducted in the ancient classical world. What we call science arose in Europe as a result of new spirit of enquiry, of new methods of investigation, of the development of Mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. The spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs.'

These similiar remarks of some of the impartial European historians of the 20th century are fully vindicated by a dispassionate study of the contacts between the Muslim world and Christian Europe during the middle ages and of Europe's transition from the medieval to modern times. Such a study makes it obvious that the stirrings for the re-birth of Europe came from two main sources : the contact with the Muslim world during the Crusades and the impact of Muslim Spain upon Europe.

When the hordes of Europe's crusading barbarians were ravaging countries of the East, they saw almost everything sharply contrasting the state of affairs in Europe. The Westerners learned many Muslim and Oriental ways and developed a taste for the luxuries of the region. All this promoted a demand for Eastern goods and accelerated the growth of commerce. The Italians, who had acted as the transporting agents for the Crusaders, took full advantage of their opportunities to build up trading relations with

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the East. Travel was promoted, and the explorations of Marco Polo and others followed on the heels of the Crusaders. This still further encouraged trade between Europe and the Orient. The revived trade, according to Henery Elmer Barnes in his *History of Western Civilization* (Vol. I) :

“Promoted the use of towns and a more progressive element in European life. The science and culture of the Muslims were brought back to Europe and helped to create the remarkable intellectual revival of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.”

But the impact of Muslim Spain was of a much deeper significance. We have already seen that the Universities of Spain attracted students from many parts of Europe and these Universities imparted instructions in all subjects : Philosophy, chemistry, astronomy, etc. Thus the treasures of Muslim knowledge reached Europe through those European students who had drunk at the fountains of Muslim learning in Andalusia. It is in this manner that the scientific method was introduced to Christian Europe. Sir Roger Bacon, whose role in the History of the development of science is of an abiding value, is well known for having benefitted from Muslims. This is evident from the fact that the school at Oxford where he was educated had been established for the propagation of Muslim learning by the Jews who had been driven out of Spain by the Christians and had reached England with William of Normandy. In this respect the remarks of Robert Briffault are very illuminating :

“Neither Roger Bacon nor his later namesake has any title to be credited with having introduced the experimental method. Roger Bacon was no more than one of the apostles of Muslim science and method to Christian Europe, and he never wearied of declaring that a knowledge of Arabic and Arabian science was for his contemporaries the only way to true knowledge. Discussions as to who was the originator of the experimental method like the fostering of every Arab discovery or invention on the first European who happens to mention it, such



as the invention of compass to a fabulous Flavio Gioja of Amalfi, of alcohol to Aronold of Villensene, of lenses and gunpowder to Bacon or Schwartz, are part of the colossal misrepresentation of the origin of European civilization. The experimental method of the Arabs was by Bacon's time widespread and eagerly cultivated throughout Europe; it had been proclaimed by Adelard of Bath, by Alexander of Neckam, by Vincent of Beauvais, by Arnold of Villensene, and by Bernard Silvestris.

The overwhelming evidence of history is that the Renaissance of Europe has a direct Islamic origin and inspiration. Consequently we find that the first manifestation of European awaking was a large-scale translation of Muslim books into various European languages. By this process Europe recovered the classical works of the Greeks and the Romans in Arabic which the Muslims had preserved at a time when Europe destroyed them, and also the valuable contributions made by Muslim to the treasure of human knowledge. It may be pointed out that during the course of translation some works were intentionally or unintentionally, ascribed to the translators themselves.

It is in view of these facts that modern Western Scholarship is increasingly coming to the realization that the modern civilization particularly modern science which is the basis and the source of strength of modern civilization—has a direct Islamic origination. Citations from the writings of a few out of numerous noted European scholars would make this point clear. According to Robert Briffault:

‘It was under the influence of Arabian and Moorish revival of culture, and not in the fifteenth or sixteenth century that the Renaissance took place. Spain not Italy, was the cradle of the re-birth of Europe. After steadily sinking lower and lower into barbarism, it had reached the darkest depths of ignorance and degradation when the cities of Baghdad, Cairo, Cordova, Toledo, were growing centres of civilization and intellectual activity. It was there that new life arose which was to grow into a new phase of human evolution.



From the time when the influence of their culture made itself felt, began the stirring of a new life. The fact has been set forth again and again. But it has been nevertheless stubbornly ignored and persistently minimised."

According to another historian :

The light from which civilization was once more re-kindled did not arise from the embers of Graeco-Roman culture smouldering amid the ruins of Europe, nor from the living death of the Bosphorous. It had not come from the Northern, but the Southern invaders of the empire, the Saracens.

Hence another European writes :

It would not be forgotten that the marvellous achievement of the Italian Renaissance followed directly on the train of the Crusading period. It may be said confidently that the Renaissance rested upon a foundation of material prosperity secured by the Crusades; and it may even be that its vital sparks were struck and kindled by the class of forces which the Crusades set in motion.

According to Sarton whose work on the history of science is regarded as the most brilliant one :

"When the West was sufficiently mature to feel the need of deeper knowledge, when it finally wanted to renew its contacts with ancient thought, it turned its attention first of all not to the Greek sources, but to the Arabic ones."

The other main factor, besides the introduction of the Muslim sciences and the contact with Muslim civilization which had a stimulating effect on man's march towards progress and which brought about the Renaissance in Europe was the relaxation of the iron grip of the Church and the emancipation of the individual in Europe. The old order, which existed there before Europe came into contact with the world of Islam (which had no priestcraft and refused to recognize the difference between lay and clerical,



between spiritual and mundane as it was understood in Europe), had been the empire of the Church, the commune, the guild, the scholastic system : the individual was always part of some group, and had no existence apart from it. The new order brought about after the Reformation was the State, the National Church, the merchant, the individual. The old order had as fundamentals authority and ascetism : the new had reason and joy in the whole of life. For thousand years there had been as much authority in the social life of Europe as in her intellectual. Man used to be bound to a bishop a lord, a municipality, to a school or a body. Now he proudly stepped on the stage himself, eager to develop his capacities for his own benefit, with boundless confidence in his will, his superiority and his infinite variety.

This change also resulted from Europe's contact with the Muslim world. According to Ernest Barker :

"The Crusades, if they did not remove, at least weakened the old clear distinction between sacred and profane, the lay and the clerical, the temporal and the spiritual ; they were the consecration of the fighting layman, and in their way they led to emancipation of the laity. Henceforth, it may be claimed, priestly orders no longer dominated men, and a new lay attitude to the world replaced the ecclesiastical attitude of the Middle Ages."

All this inevitably leads one to the conclusion that the bases of modern civilization were laid by Muslim and that they played basic and vital role in bringing this civilization into existence. At this point one feels constrained to express full agreement with the following words of Drapper.

' I have to deplore the systematic manner in which the literature of Europe has contrived to put out of sight our scientific obligations to the Mohammedans. Surely they cannot be much longer hidden. Injustice founded on religious rancour and national conceit cannot be perpetuated for ever.



## THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

It is inherent in the very nature of Islam that its followers should found a state. One of the verses of the Quran says : "Those who, if we establish them (in authority and power) in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. With Allah rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs." (XXII : 41) In another similar verse of the Quran the Muslims have been referred to as the best people who stand for a great cause : to order human beings to do good and prevent them from committing wrong. These verses are very significant and sum up the entire teaching of the Quran regarding the duties of Muslims. The first part of the first verse relates to the duty that have been imposed upon muslim namely that they should assemble in the mosque five times every day in order to practise the lessons of equality, liberty, farternity and obedience to the Leader ; and to part with some of their wealth in order to establish their state on these fundamentals. The first part of the second verse regards the Muslims as the best people and as such incapable of doing wrong. They are, therefore, required to order others to do good and restrain them from committing wrong. These express injunctions entail enormous responsibilities upon the Muslims as a whole and require them not only to carry out these orders within their own jurisdiction, but also beyond it, if occasion arises. It was on account of this imperative injunction that the Muslims were sometimes required to wage Holy War against state pledged to the enmity of Islam. But it may be noted that these wars were never fought for personal aggrandisement or national glorification, instead, they were for the establishment of the Rule of God and to terminate the rule of some human beings over others, in order to liberate humanity from the shackles of slavery, whether mental or physical.



The third Caliph of Islam, 'Uthman is reported to have remarked : "Allah restrains with the state what he does not restrain with Quran." In other words, the evils which are not eradicated through the preachings of the Quran, need the coercive power of the state to eradicate them.

After mentioning the chief objective of Islamic state, it becomes necessary to find out the methods through which this ideal state is to be brought into actual existence. For the realization of this objective, the most important point is the appointment of its head (called *Imam* or *Amir* or *Khalifah* in the Islamic terminology). The guiding principle of the Muslims in this respect has been the practice of the immediate successors of the Prophet Muhammad who had established an ideal Islamic state. Let us now trace the various modes of succession that were adopted in the appointment of a Caliph during this period.

The first Caliph, Abu Bakr was elected by the people of Medina on the consideration of being a Qurayshite Muslim, the senior most and devoted companion of the Prophet, and had the privilege of leading the congregational prayers during the last illness of the Prophet. When the Helpers (*Ansar*) in Medina had suggested the appointment of two Heads, one from them and the other from the Quraish, Hazrat Abu Bakr had emphatically refused to concede to their impracticable proposal.

The second Caliph Hazrat Umar was nominated by the first Caliph on the sole consideration that he was the best among the principal companions of the Prophet. His nomination was made in consultation with the members of the Advisory Council of the Caliph and it was announced during the life time of the Caliph and approved by the general public. The third Caliph was elected by a Board of electors consisting of six very important companions of the Prophet appointed by the previous Caliph. They were instructed to elect a Caliph from among themselves. Abdullah the son of Umar was prevented from contesting the election. The fourth Caliph, Hazrat Ali was also elected by the people of Medina on the consideration that he was the sole survivor of the principal companions of the Prophet and his election was a foregone conclusion.



From the above mentioned modes of succession, it can safely be concluded that firstly the element of election is essential with regard to the appointment of the Head of the Islamic State. Secondly, the principle of hereditary succession was cut at the very root by Hazrat Umar who had explicitly excluded his own equally capable son from seeking election. Thirdly, only from among the capable Muslims, possessed of irreproachable character and imbued with the Islamic ideology, could a person be chosen for this exalted office.

After the election of the Caliph, every adult Muslim citizen was required to take oath of allegiance to the head. This was necessitated by two factors. Firstly, all of them had not voted at the time of election, and secondly, all the citizens must be bound by an oath of allegiance so that they should always obey the orders of the Head of the State and co-operate with him in matters of State. Once the oath of allegiance was taken by the believers, it could not be broken unless, of course, he violated the laws of Shariah flagrantly. The oath of allegiance was purely a contractual affair between the Head and the citizens. The Muslims had surrendered all their rights in the person of the elected Head, so that he should regulate the affairs of the State in accordance with divine laws ; and if he acted contrary to the contract was no longer in existence and the citizens were exonerated from oath of allegiance.

After the election of the Head was over and the oath of allegiance taken for him by the believers, it was customary for him to deliver his inaugural address in which he used to lay down his policy. The inaugural address of the first Caliph in Islam is significant in this respect. His inaugural address shows at once that the obedience and co-operation from the believers were not unconditional. If the Caliph acted in accordance with the Laws of Shari'ah, he could demand obedience, otherwise the believers were at liberty to disobey him. He was not the master but the servant of the state and as such he was open to correction. He could be criticised even by an ordinary person in the street ; and that his chief duty was to maintain justice between the strong and the weak.

Since the elected Head was regarded as a whole time servant of



the State, he was allowed a maintenance allowance from the central treasury. This allowance was just enough to maintain himself and his family, and was fixed by the members of his Advisory Council taking into consideration the standard of living of the people.

#### **Administration by Mutual Consultation**

Another feature of the Islamic State is to carry on the administration through mutual consultation. The Quran says "And those who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation," and "O Muhammad consult these in the affair. Then when thou hast taken a decision, but thy trust in Allah. For God loves those who put their trust in (Him) (Quran III: 159)." Thus there should exist in an Islamic state a Consultative Council consisting of representatives of the people, reflecting the total legal wisdom of the entire community. The appointment of this Council is made by the Head himself from among the various sections of the people, the only criteria for appointment of its members being, their intimate knowledge of the Shariah, their previous services to the cause of Islam, and their character. The Head is to legislate in consultation with his Council and administer the affairs of the State with their consent. Since the final authority vests in the Quran and the traditions of the prophet, pleas it should be based on, and be in accord with them. The decision should normally be unanimous and the Council should have a sense of collective responsibility.

So long as the Head of the state, in consultation with the members of the Council, administers, in accordance with the laws of *Shariah*, he is allowed to remain in office. But the moment he tries to violate flagrantly the divine law, the Council revolts against him and brings about his deposition which is ultimately ratified by the general public. The importance of the members of this Council may not be minimised by the fact that its appointment is made by the Head himself, and as such its members may be regarded as his subordinates and subservient to his decisions. In fact, in Islamic polity the members of the Council were more important than the members of the modern Cabinet who rise and fall along with the Prime Ministers. It is the members of the Advisory Council who



determine the election and deposition of the Head. Since they were appointed on the basis of their merits rather than party affiliation, their positions remained unshaken even if the Head was changed.

#### **Character of Islamic State :**

As all the guiding principles of the Islamic State were derived from the Quran which, according to Muslim belief, is a divinely revealed book, some people assert that it is a religious institution. In reality the Islamic State is not in the sense of Medieval Christian Theocracy in which certain ecclesiastical authorities claimed for themselves the right of law-making. Others assert that the Islamic state is temporal as it is required to administer affairs which are temporal in Character and not spiritual. It is, however not temporal in the modern sense of the term since the modern state is not guided by religion, and it usually lacks moral conscience and a moral basis for the administration and application of its law. Since the fundamental ingredients of an Islamic State are derived from the Quran, it becomes a little difficult to separate religious from temporal functions. And since its chief function is to protect Islam and to promote its cause, both within and without, and to administer both religious and temporal affairs in accordance with the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet, this state may be regarded as both religious as well as temporal. It should, however, be made clear that the state religion of the Islamic state must be Islam for whose protection and maintenance it is called into existence and continues to exist.

It will be an error to compare the Islamic state with any modern state, as it fundamentally differs from all of them with regard to the conception of sovereignty and in that respect occupies an unique position. In all other state *from time immemorial*, unrestricted sovereign powers have been assumed by human beings, resulting in exclusive privileges for the sovereign authorities and deprivation of equitable rights of the people as a whole. It is because of inherent human weakness that human beings, when they are entrusted with sovereign powers without any restriction, more often than not, misuse them in their own favour, or of the party, or class which they represent.



Owing to this unrestricted right of sovereignty to human beings, even in modern states which are based upon popular sovereignty, equality, liberty, justice and toleration are rarely to be found. Strange though it may sound, this contention is nevertheless based on facts. No doubt, in modern states laws are made by the representatives of the people, yet they are made in such a way as to suit the interests of either a class or a party at the cost of the opposition or they remain so defective that different interpretations are put for different sections of people. They are so nicely twisted that they always favour the ruling class. In all modern states, from the President down to the legislators, they are allowed in the first instance to enjoy some sort of exclusive privileges, for instance, exemption from taxation; exemption from appearance in the court, or of immunity from arrest (while performing their official duties), reservation of seats in trains or planes, or other priorities in several other respects. Secondly, the ruling party is in a position to make such laws which could suit and advance its own interest, although it may adversely affect the opposition.

In an Islamic state, on the other hand, sovereignty belongs to God the Almighty. This does not, however, mean that in an Islamic state all the laws are to be made by God himself or that the Quran provides all possible positive laws, and that the people have nothing to do with sovereign functions. On the other hand the laws enacted in an Islamic State are to be made by the people of the State, but in the light of the Quranic fundamentals supplemented by the traditions of their Prophet. Thus, in an Islamic State, the people enjoy a partial and restricted right of law making. They cannot, of course, make any law which runs contrary to clear Quranic injunctions which are meant for universal application. In this sense, the people who make the laws are not really law-makers. Nor are they above the law; they are only the executors of law and thus they stand at par with ordinary citizens. The Islamic state may, therefore, be termed: Theo-democracy, for, in such a state, under the sovereignty and paramountcy of God, a limited popular sovereignty has been conferred on the believers.

It is this restriction imposed upon the framers of law in an Islamic State which has created a world of difference between this



State and all other states, and has resulted in the fact that the Islamic state possesses the following characteristics.

### **Fraternity**

In accordance with a famous verse of the Holy Quran : "The believers are but a single brotherhood", the first characteristic of an Islamic State is fraternity. This verse asserts that Muslims, whatever their country, race, colour, or language, are members of a single brotherhood. Among the believers white and black, rich and poor, master and servant, Arab and non-Arab, stand together and enjoy equal rights and bear equal responsibilities in running the state. Such is the force of the Islamic brotherhood that even blood relationship counts for nothing. An unbeliever, even if he is connected with a believer by ties of blood, falls into a totally different category of citizenship.

As regard the division of the Believers into nations and tribes, the Holy Quran says : "We made you into nations and tribes so that you may recognise each other. Verily the most honoured of you with Allah is he who is the most righteous of you". (XIIX) This verse emphasises that all regional and tribal distinctions are merely for the sake of convenience. They can not form the basis for the classification of rights or status of human beings, nor should the separation or fusion of nationalities depend upon them. Among the believers, if any distinction is to be made at all, it should be on the basis of righteousness.

### **Equality**

Since sovereignty in an Islamic state is hedged by the injunctions of the *Shariah*, whose principles are universal and equally applicable to all, the obvious resultant characteristic of such a state is equality. It is, however, a mistaken notion that Islam sanctions absolute equality among its votaries. Absolute equality is denied by nature for no two persons are equal in every respect. Any amount of effort on the part of a State to equalise the mental faculties or even physical gifts of different persons will prove fruitless. Consequently, a well-known verse of the Quran says : Verily we have given preference to some over others." However, the ques-



tion arises : "What is the concept of equality in Islam?" It means equality before law and in matters of civic rights and obligations to the State. Above all, it means affording of equal opportunities to all, irrespective of caste, colour, race, sex or birth ; it also connotes social equality, a principle which even some of the most progressive and democratic states in the world have not been able to enthrone even in the present age. Only merit, character and devotion to the cause of Islam should enable a person to occupy the highest position in the State. A person's worth should not be judged by birth, but by efficiency, character and service to the cause of Islam.

#### Liberty

The third characteristic of an Islamic state is liberty which in its perspective was, for the first time, presented by Islam to humanity. The greatest charter of individual liberty is involved in that very phrase which every believer is required to pronounce while declaring his or her faith. The pronouncement of this phrase : "There is no god but God," excludes all other authority but that of God. A Muslim is free as he is not required to obey any other authority except that of God. In other words, this would mean that he is only free within the limits prescribed by the Shariah. None can encroach upon the rights of other, but at the same time can feel free within his or her own rights.

Freedom of expression and liberty of conscience are the two corner stones of Islamic polity. Even an ordinary citizen of the State can criticise the highest in the state and call him to account. However, licence in the name of liberty is not allowed; none enjoys the right of slandering people or making fun of the authorities. It is, however, the obligation of the Islamic State not to deprive any citizen of the liberty which Islam confers upon him without proving his guilt by the due process of law, and without giving him full opportunity and facilities for his defence.

#### Justice

The fourth characteristic of an Islamic state is Justice. Justice in an Islamic state should be impartial and no respecter of



persons, whether high or low, prince or peasant, white or black, Muslim or non-Muslim. The Quran enjoins upon Muslims to decide a case on the basis of equality, justice and upright testimony. As such the entire Muslim community is held responsible for the administration of justice.

According to Islamic notions, the Head of the Islamic state has a two-fold judicial function ; one positive and the other negative. His positive functions relate to the establishment of peace in the state, maintenance of concord among the various sections of the people and the protection of the weak against the strong. His negative functions concern punishment of the evil doers and the restitution of the rights of the injured. For the dispensation of justice, the Head of the State has to appoint judges, well-versed in the Islamic Law, God fearing and of irreproachable character and sterling piety. The judges who apply divine law consider themselves responsible not only to the State but also to God Almighty and, as such, dispense justice equitably and speedily. Since the court of law is regarded as God's court, no preferential treatment is to be given even to the highest in the state. "The King can do no wrong" does not hold good in an Islamic state. No one can claim exemption from appearance in the court or even a preferential seat in the court ; recording of deposition of influential persons through commission is not allowed by Islamic law. The Islamic law lays down an easy procedure for the conduct of cases and justice is to be speedily meted out to rich and poor alike, and free of cost. However, Islamic state lays greater emphasis on the prevention of crimes than on punishing the culprits after the offences have been committed.

#### **Toleration**

In accordance with a verse of the Quran. "We created believers and unbelievers," the population of an Islamic state is divided into believers and un-believers. Among the believers are two kinds : firstly, those who believe in all the revealed religions and their Prophets and also in Islam as the last religion and Prophet Mohammad as the last prophet ; and secondly, those who believe in their own revealed books and Prophets, but not



Islam or its Prophet Mubammad. Since the Islamic state is an ideological state it is but natural that its administration should primarily be entrusted to those who believe in its ideology and agree to sacrifice their all, in running the state and making it a success. In order to defend the frontiers of the Islamic state and to promote the cause of its ideology, military service is made compulsory upon all the able-bodied Muslims without any exception. In return, they are guaranteed maintenance allowance from the state.

The second group of believers are the followers of the revealed books who believe in the existence of God but do not believe in Islam. When such people agree to live within the jurisdiction of an Islamic state, their relations are guided in accordance with the famous verse of the Quran ; "No compulsion in matters of faith".

The Islamic State regards them as *dhimmis* or its own responsibility and guarantees them full liberty of conscience, protection of property, life, and honour and freedom of religious belief. Nay, it goes one step further and provides full scope for the growth of their culture and traditions and the administration of their civil affairs in accordance with their own religious laws.

An Islamic state does not believe in forcing its own culture and traditions on others or in adopting coercive measures to get the culture of the protected subjects submerged into that of the Muslims as usually happens under a nationalist dispensation. As the protected people are not obliged to defend the Islamic state, they are required to pay a small tax in return known as *jizyah*, and in case they offer themselves for military service, they are exempted from that tax as well.

No distinction is made between the Muslims and the followers of other revealed books in matters of civic rights, and the latter could qualify themselves for all offices of the state excepting the religious ones.

Thirdly the unbelievers are those who do not believe in the existence of God Almighty and in the Hereafter. The followers of this



godless cult are fundamentally opposed to all the believers of God and are at perpetual warfare with them.

Islam which believes in the establishment of peace by liberating mankind from all shackles of slavery is the worst enemy of this godless cult. So long as this cult survives Islam can not flourish and will not be able to achieve its ideals; and therefore as a moral force, it is directly opposed to this evil force. As such, this godless cult has been described in the Quran as mischief which must be rooted out from the universe so that the faith of God may flourish.

#### **Islamic State and the Individual**

Since the Islamic state encompasses both the religious and the temporal spheres, and comes into existence through a contract between the elected Head and the people, it is nothing if not a device to fulfil the aspirations of the individuals. Under Islamic dispensation the Head of the state and the nation are all animated by an ethical ideal, and it is the duty of each one of them to strive for this ideal. Accordingly the personal liberty of the individual is guaranteed to a very large extent under this system; and political power is not concentrated in the hands of one person.

#### **Separation of Powers**

The Islamic state is noted for separation of powers. Although judges are to be appointed by the Head of the State in consultation with his Council, yet judiciary is completely independent of the Executive. The fact that a judge can accept a suit against the Head of the state without any previous permission and can try him in an open court is an index of the independence of judiciary in an Islamic State. Nor is the Head exempted from personal appearance, or entitled to any preferential seat in the court. The question of taking deposition of great and prominent personalities by means of commission does not arise in an Islamic state.

#### **Economic Policy**

The economic policy of Islamic state is to be based on some positive injunctions in the Quran. The Quran says : "So that the



wealth should not circulate only among the rich from among you". The distribution of wealth among all classes of people has been ensured by the institution of zakat, which is imposed on savings as well as commercial capital; and by restrictions on the process of testamentary disposition, law of inheritance, and the prohibition of usury.

The Islamic state does not believe in class war nor does it undertake a complete socialisation or democratic management of the basic instruments of production and distribution. It does allow the individuals to acquire private property so that their incentive may not be lost ; but, on the other hand, it does not allow the concentration of wealth into a few hands in order to perpetuate capitalism in its naked form. The economic system of an Islamic state thus stands midway between the antagonistic systems in the present world e. g. Capitalism and Communism.



## THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM OF ISLAM

Islam provides guidance to its followers in all walks of life, material as well as spiritual. Far from despising material well-being, it instructs its followers : "And neglect not thy portion of this world" (Quran XXVI : 77). It lays, however, emphasis on the double composition of man, by reminding "but of men is he who saith : "Our Lord, give unto us in this world" ; and he hath no portion in the Hereafter. And of men is he who saith : 'Our Lord give unto us in this world and in the next, and guard us from the doom of Fire. For these there is in store a goodly portion out of that which they have earned ; God is swift at reckoning" (Quran II : 200-202). In other verses we find it stated with precision that all that God has created—the earth, the moon, the stars, the oceans, and all the elements of nature—have been yoked by God to the service of humankind.

It goes without saying that it is upto man to know and to profit from the creation of God, and profit in a rational way, paying due regard to the future.

According to the Quran, the correct position of man is that of vicegerent of God on earth. "It is He Who hath made you His vicegerents on earth" (Quran, chapter XX). In other words, the authority is delegated by God and can be wielded by man only within the limits prescribed by Him. Not only that, the Quran goes further to declare that God has purchased of the believers their persons and their goods in return for paradise. The Divine right to demand complete submission is based on the fact that according to the Quran, His is the Creation and His is the Law, that there is no Lord but He, it is He who sustains the heavens and the earth, it is He who causes us to live and to die, it is He who is possessed of sovereignty, and the authority rests with none but Allah, and He commands us not to offer submission to any one save Him



and that this is the right way of life. "The Command is for none but God. He hath commanded that Ye worship none but him." (Chapter XII.)

As such Islam does not recognise the exclusive right of any individual, group of individuals, or race over the ultimate sources of wealth to the detriment of the rest of humanity. These resources namely, the earth, and all its treasures, the sun, the moon, the stars, the winds that drive the clouds towards thirsty lands, and everything else in heaven and earth have all been subordinated by God to the service of man as such and not to the service of any particular individual, or class of individuals. "It is God who hath created the heavens and the earth and sendeth down rain from the skies, and with it bringeth out fruits wherewith to feed you; it is He who hath made the ships subject to you that they may sail through the sea by His command; and the rivers also hath He made subject to you (Quran, chapter XIV). No doubt Islam recognizes private ownership. But this ownership is not absolute because real ownership belongs to God alone and man holds it in trust only. In order to preserve the beneficent character of the Islamic system, God has clearly laid down the lines on which the whole of the economic life of man should revolve. We have been ordained to eat only those things which are pure and chaste (*tayyab*) and have been obtained by honest means. "Enjoy all things good and pure, and work righteousness" (Quran, chapter XXIII). This should serve as a guiding principle in the entire field of economic activity. Islam has forbidden all forms of activity which tend to damage or harm the rightful interest of the individual for the society. The hoarding of goods in order to artificially raise their prices, speculation, profiteering and monopoly of the essential means of production by an individual or group which lead to the deprivation of the majority, are all forbidden.

While the Book of Islam claims that wealth is the grace and good bestowed by God the Almighty, it also stresses the fact that it is to be considered a mere means to certain ends and not an end in itself. When one is convinced of this conception of wealth as a means to an end is the real cause of the acceptance of



co-operation and not competition as the prevailing principle of economic life. This constant presence of cooperation and absence of competition among the individuals forming the body-politic of Islamic brotherhood results in a much closer bond between the individuals themselves on the one hand, and between the individuals and the community on the other.

As Islam is a religion which governs all the spheres of man's life, Muslims are bound to regulate the economic life also according to Divine Commandments. One of the verses of the Quran explains the underlying principle of economic regulations in Islam in these words: "So that this wealth may not circulate solely among the rich from among you" (Quran LIX : 7). It is on the basis of this fundamental principle that Islam has constructed its entire economic system.

The cardinal principles of Islamic economic ideology are :

- (1) The conception of wealth as something which should always be in circulation.
- (2) The undesirability of the accumulation of wealth.
- (3) The elimination of all kinds of economic exploitation.
- (4) The removal of grave disparities in the economic conditions of individuals, thus eliminating class conflicts.

To begin with, wealth in Islam is something which should always remain in circulation. The wealth that is hoarded, which is withdrawn from circulation and lies idle, obviously serves no useful purpose. He who hoards wealth is a criminal against society and must be punished both here and in the hereafter. The conception of wealth as something always in circulation, when preached by Islam for the first time, was something really revolutionary, for the people who withdraw wealth from circulation or accumulate it idly in immense quantities were condemned as enemies of the human species.



To prevent man from trying to accumulate vast stores of wealth to the detriment of other members of the society, Islam has banned all kinds of economic exploitation, the only object of which is to deprive others of their rightful share in national wealth. Exploitation of all kinds, whether of the poor by the rich, or of the buyer by the seller, or of the slave by the master, or of the woman by man, or of the employee by the employer, is absolutely disallowed. The slave can earn and possess the wealth he has earned. The women can acquire property by all fair means, whether by working for it or acquiring it by gift or inheritance and the worker cannot be forced to work beyond his capacity. The buyer and the seller cannot deceive one another nor can they be misled to strike a bargain in ignorance. Nor is speculation of any kind allowed by Islam. Fruits or crops cannot be sold before they have actually made their appearance. The merchant cannot purchase foodgrains from the cultivator until the latter knows the current prices of foodgrains in the open market.

The best possible means of accumulating wealth in a few hands is through the institution of interest or usury which has been declared unlawful in Islam. Islam has made a very clear distinction between commercial gains and interest on money lending. The Quran (II ; 275) says : "God permitteth trading and forbiddeth usury". A little later (II : 279) it says : "If you do not give up (usury), then he warned of war against God and His messenger : and if ye repent, then ye shall have your principal ; neither ye wrong nor be wronged". The basis of the prohibition of usury is unilateral risk. For one borrows a certain sum for fructifying it ; it is possible that circumstances should not have been propitious enough for earning sufficiently in order to be able to pay the promised interest, the lender not participating in the risks of the exploitation.

It is not possible to compel an individual to deprive himself of his money, in order to lend it to others gratuitously and without interest. But this need of the poor people can be met out of the central exchequer as one of the charges on State income is the obligation of helping those who are in debt. Hence, the public trea-



surv, in the light of Islamic principles, should organise interest-free loans, in addition to and for completing the loans coming from charitable men or organisations, on the basis of mutuality and co-operation with those who are in need of loans.

In the case of commercial loans, there is also the system of *mudarabah*, in which one lends money and participates simultaneously in gains as well as in risks. Such a course is permissible. However Islam demands that in all contractual participation the profit as well as the risk should be shared by both the contracting parties. As far as banks are concerned, the activities are principally of three kinds : remitting of amounts from one place to another, assuring safety of the savings of the clients, and lending money to others on profit. The expenses of the functioning are borne by those who utilise the banks. The only question that remains to be discussed is that of loans for commerce, industry or any other trade motive. If the bank participates in the profits of his debtors as well as in their risks, Islam allows such banking activities otherwise not.

If the saving banks of a government declare at the end of the year, and not at its beginning, that they are in a position to pay such and such percentage of profit to the clients, not only would this be lawful according to Islam, but also the public could have no fear in depositing its savings with governmental banks, in spite of the silence in the beginning with regard to the quantity of the expected profit. To sum up, the principle of mutual participation in profit as well as in risks must be observed in all commercial contracts.

All the games of chance including lotteries and horse racing have been prohibited by Islam ; and the Quran has characterised them as the work of Satan. It is a recognized fact that most of the social evils emanate from the mal-distribution of national income, some individuals becoming too rich and the others too poor and as such victims of exploitation by the rich. It is calculated that in these games of chance, less than one percent of the people thrive at the expense of the remaining 99 percent. In other words, 99 percent



people are impoverished in order to enrich the 1 percent. The profit of one means the ruin of the rest. Whether the games of chance, including lotteries, are private or nationalised, the evil of accumulating wealth in the hands of the few at the expense of a very vast majority, works with full force. Hence the total prohibition of games of chance and lotteries in Islam.

In spite of all these precautions there is a possibility of some kind of disparity arising in the economic conditions of the various members of the community. Steps are, therefore, introduced by Islam to eliminate this disparity. The first important injunction imposed by Islam is that the wealth, whether moveable or immovable, in the possession of man must be divided among all the children at his death. Thus no accumulated wealth can last longer than a single generation. This strikes at the very root of the inhuman Law of Primogeniture according to which the eldest son alone must inherit all the wealth of a dying father.

In matters of inheritance both the individual right of disposing of one's wealth, and the collective right in as much as one is a member of society must be simultaneously satisfied. In this direction Islam has taken two steps firstly, the obligatory distribution of the goods of a deceased person among his close relatives, and secondly, a restriction on the freedom of bequest through wills and testaments. The legal heirs do not require any testamentary disposition, and inherit the property of the deceased in the proportions determined by law. A testament is required solely in favour of those who have no right to inherit from a defunct. The first charges on the property left by a defunct are the expenses of his burial. What remains goes then to his creditors, the debt having priority over the right of the inheritors. In the third place, his testament is executed to the measure and extent that it does not exceed the third of the available property after burial and payment of debts. It is only after satisfying these prior obligations that heirs are considered. The male or female partner of life, the parents, the descendants, sons and daughters are the first class heirs, and inherit in all cases. Brothers and sisters and other remoter relatives inherit from a deceased person only in the absence of nearer relatives.



A homicide is excluded from the inheritance of his own victim. The Prophet has also prohibited inheritance among relatives to different religions even between the husband and wife. However, the right of testament can be availed of in this respect.

The restriction of the will to the extent of one third property has been laid down in order to prevent the accumulation of wealth in the hand of a few, a thing which would happen if one should give all his property by will to a single person excluding totally one's near relatives. Islam desires the circulation of wealth among as large a number of people as possible, taking into consideration the interest of the family.

The next injunction imposes certain taxes which are to be levied on those who have earned more wealth and are to be utilised in improving the lot of the less fortunate.

Taxes in Islam come under two different categories, one is chargeable from Muslims and the other from non-Muslims. The taxes chargeable from Muslims are generally known as *Sadaqat* and are considered a religious obligation, the non-observance of which deprives a Muslim of all his rights to be treated as a member of the brotherhood of the faith.

1. *Zakat*, as is so well known, is one of the five pillars on which Islam is based and the collection of this tax is one of the sacred duties of the Muslim State and the poor members of the community have a right to ask the State to compensate them from their economic short-comings. *Zakat* is a tax chargeable from the Muslims only on their accumulated income at the end of the year at the rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. This tax was chargeable on the following items.

1. Gold and silver (20 *mithqal* gold i.e,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tola and 200 dirhams of silver).
2. Animals kept for trade purposes.
3. Goods of merchandise meant for trade and commerce.
4. Hidden treasure found in the State.



*Sadaqat* were those taxes which Muslims contributed to the state out of their own free will. Some of them were compulsory e.g. *Sadaqat* of Idul Fitr and skins of sacrificial animals. They were deposited in the Public Treasury.

II. *Ushr* was the tax charged from the Muslim land owners at the rate of 10 per cent if natural facilities for watering were available ; otherwise at the rate of 5 per cent.

III. *Ushur* was an import duty chargeable from all traders. This tax was chargeable only once in a year and on goods which exceeded the value of 200 dirhams or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tolas of gold. The rate of this duty from a Muslim merchant was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

IV. *Awqaf* comprised that property which was dedicated to God by Muslims and the income derived from such property used to be deposited in the Baitul Mal.

V. *Daraib* was an extraordinary tax imposed on rich Muslims in order to meet the expenses<sup>2</sup> of the State in times of emergency.

VI. Miscellaneous receipts (*Amwal-i-Fadila*) derived from the property of an heirless Muslim owner, or the property of a Muslim who renounced Islam and fled from the country.

VII. *Kara al-Ard* was the income derived from those lands which were given for cultivation on fixed annual rental. During the early days of Islam the conquered lands were not divided among Muslims soldiers as a part of the booty; and they were left in the possession of the non-Muslim conquered people. Muslims were not allowed even to purchase these lands from non-Muslims. Later on when Muslims desired to become cultivators, they could be given land from the central government and were charged an equivalent amount which were chargeable from the non-Muslims as land tax or *Khiraj*.

From the non-Muslims, only three kinds of taxes were chargeable :

I. *Jizia*. It was a tax chargeable from non-Muslims in lieu of the guarantee extended to them for the protection of their life,



property, religious rites, and liberty of conscience ; and also for their exemption from military service. As such this tax was charged from only those able-bodied persons who could render military service. In case a non-Muslim was willing to render military service he was exempted from this tax. It was a graded tax chargeable at the rate of 48 *dirhams* (approximately Rs. 12 per annum) from the rich class, 24 *dirhams* (approximately Rs. 6 per annum) from the middle class, and 12 *dirhams* (Rs. 3 per annum) from the poor class.

II. Land tax (*Khiraaj*). It constituted the revenue derived from the conquered lands, which were called *Khiraaj* lands. A survey of such lands was taken by the Caliph Umar and the soil for rent purposes was classified according to its nature, quality and productivity. In this way reasonable rent either in cash or kind was fixed on an equitable basis. If it was to be taken in kind, it did not, in any case, exceed half the produce. The peasants were granted proprietary rights and their lands were inalienable. The rent once fixed was not to be enhanced.

III. *Ushur* was an import duty charged from all traders. It was charged only once in year and on goods which exceeded the value of 200 *dirhams* or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tolas of gold. The rate of this duty from the protected subject was at the rate of 5 per cent.

The Quran (IX : 60) has prescribed the principles regulating budget of State expenditure in Islam in the following terms : 'Verily the *sadaqat* (i.e. taxes on Muslims) are only for the poor and the needy, and those who work for these taxes, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the necks (i.e. slaves and prisoners of war), and the heavily indebted, and in the path of God, and for the way-farer—a duty imposed by God : God is Knower, Wise'.

It is interesting to note that the Quran which gives precise directions with regard to budgetary expenditure has enunciated neither rules nor rates of the income of the State. While scrupulously respecting the practice of the Prophet and of his immediate successors, this silence of the Quran may be interpreted as giving a latitude to the government to change the rules for income according to circumstances in the interest of the people.



The chief characteristic feature during the Orthodox Caliphate was the grant of maintenance allowance to every Muslim from the Central Treasury.

The Caliph Umar in consultation with the members of his Advisory Body decided that the conquered lands should not be distributed among Muslim soldiers ; but the income derived from it should be deposited in the Central Treasury. He also decided that maintenance allowance should be given to every Muslim. This was devised for two reasons : firstly, military service was compulsory on every adult Muslim who was required to be on constant move in connection with military operations ; and secondly, as a soldier, the Muslims were not allowed even to own lands so that no permanent interest may be created for them in the soil.

Separate registers for regular soldiers, volunteer corps and for the poor and disabled were kept in which the names of recipients appeared ; and every Muslim was allotted pension which was regulated on the basis of relationship to the Prophet and service rendered to the cause of Islam. Master and his slave were allotted the same amount of pension. Even a Muslim child was entitled to the annuity. The annuity rose as the child grew up. Even non-Muslims were not left out as it was made a rule that all disabled, poor and sick should be provided with maintenance.

Besides the system of compulsory taxes which the rich have to pay towards the maintenance of the poor, the followers of Islam are also required to spend their wealth in voluntary charity. Those who can afford are exhorted to spend as much of their wealth as possible in ameliorating the hard lot of the poor members of the society.

Islam advocates a middle path and abhors excess in all respects. Thus have We made you an *ummah* justly balanced" (Quran : Chapter II). It condemns both extravagance and miserliness for both of them injure the best interests of the society. It is also strongly opposed to a wrong or wasteful use of resources. Says the Quran : "Eat and drink, but waste not by excess for God loveth not the wasters." Even in regard to charity Islam advocates a middle path.



“And render to the kindred their due rights as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer, but squander not (your wealth in the manner of a spendthrift). Verily, spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil One : and the Evil one is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful.” On the other hand, its condemnation of niggardliness is also equally vehement. “For God loveth not the arrogant, vainglorious (nor) those who are niggardly or enjoin niggardlines on others or hide the bounties which God hath bestowed on them ; for we have prepared for those who resist Faith a punishment that steeps them in contempt” (Quran : Chapter IV).

This means that Islam allows man to enjoy out of the fruit of his labour the amenities of life to a reasonable extent and permits him to lead an honourable life, to possess and own property, but it prohibits indulgence in extravagance and frittering away of capital on ostentatious and unproductive purposes.

What is left after meeting one's legitimate needs should be spent on the betterment of the society as a whole for the community has a claim on the wealth of an individual who has more than others as God is the real owner of everything. Although the relatives, the destitute and the wayfarer, all have a claim on the surplus wealth of man and Islam exhorts the individual to spend his wealth on them, it has been said that one must not divest oneself entirely of one's substance nor bestow it in a measure so as to render himself a destitute. The Quran says: “Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard's) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute.”

Islam does not believe in class war nor does it undertake a complete socialisation or democratic management of the means of production and distribution. It does allow the individuals to acquire private property so that their incentive may not be lost ; but, on the other hand, it does not allow the concentration of wealth in a few hands in order to perpetuate capitalism in its naked form, Thus Professor H.A.R. Gibb, writing towards the close of *Whither Islam?* says : “Within the Western world Islam still maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites. Opposed equally to the anarchy of European nationalism and the regimentation of Russian communism,



it has not yet succumbed to that obsession with the economic side of life which is characteristic of present day Europe and present day Russian alike. Its economic position has been admirably summed up by another Orientalist, Professor Massignon: "Islam has the merit of standing for a very equalitarian conception of the contribution of each citizen by the tithe to the resources of the community; it is hostile to unrestricted exchange, to banking capital, to State loans, to indirect taxes on objects of prime necessity, but it holds to the rights of the father and the husband, to private property, and to commercial capital. Here again it occupies intermediate position between the doctrines of bourgeois capitalism and Bolshevik communism" (pp. 378-79).



## THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

The conception of justice in an Islamic state is that it should be impartial and no respect of person, whether high or low prince or peasant, white or black, Muslim or non-Muslim. The Quran enjoins upon Muslim to decide cases on the basis of equity, justice and upright testimony. Hence the entire Muslim community is held responsible for the administration of justice.

The following verses of the Quran sum up the conception of justice in an Islamic state.

“O ye who believe be (firm) maintainers of justice bearers of witness for Allah’s sake, even though it be against your own selves, or your parents or your kind, and whether it be against rich or poor ; for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts) lest ye swerve ; and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verify Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do”. (IV : 135).

“If (O Muhammad) thou judgest (concerning the affairs of non-Muslims) judge in equity between them (however hostile may be their attitude towards thee). For Allah loveth those who judge in equity” (V : 45).

Thus the Holy Quran has emphasised again and again that however hostile, mischievous or cruel may be the persons with whom authorities have to deal, it is not permissible for them to deviate even slightly from the path of justice.

In the light of the above Quranic injunctions, it becomes incumbent upon the Head of the State to provide free impartial justice to all, irrespective of caste, creed, colour, nationality, race, status, or sex.

According to Islamic notions, the Head of the Islamic State has a two-fold judicial function ; one positive, and the negative.



His positive functions relate to the establishment of peace in the state, maintenance of the weak against the strong. His negative functions concern punishment of evil doers and the restitution of the right of the injured.

#### Stress on Prevention

Muslims have laid greater stress on the prevention of crimes than on punishing the culprits after the offences has been committed. The system was more preventive than retributive. The *Muhtasib*<sup>1</sup> and his officials exerted themselves to prevent crimes against God and the *Sahibus-Shurta*<sup>2</sup>, and his subordinates to prevent offences against the state and the private individual.

#### Qualifications and Duties of the Judges

For the dispensation of justice, the Head of the State had to appoint highly qualified, competent and responsible persons as judges. According to Al-Mawardi, the celebrated jurist, the following qualifications are prescribed for them :

- (1) Should be in possession of sound knowledge of Islamic Jurisprudence.
- (2) Should possess irreproachable character.
- (3) Should possess full mental faculties, and be sound of sight and hearing.
- (4) Should be Muslim in faith.
- (5) Should be an adult.
- (6) Should be a free citizen.

The judges were required to perform the following duties :

- (1) Settlement of disputes and restoration of rights.

1. and 2. Two well-known offices in Islamic states of the past.



- (2) Administration of the properties of minors and the insane.
- (3) Supervision of endowments and execution of wills.
- (4) Encouragement of and arranging for the marriage of widows ; and enforcement of period of their waiting.
- (6) Control over subordinates and watching their conduct.

The judge was to give judgment and the execution thereof was in the hands of the executive authority.

In applying law, the judges always kept the following Tradition of the Prophet in view :

When Ma'adh ibn Jabal, a judge designate of Yaman paid a visit to the Prophet to take his leave before his departure he was asked by the Prophet : "On what basis shalt thou decide litigation?" "According to the provisions in the Book of God (the Quran)," said Ma'adh "And if thou dost not find any provision therein," asked the Prophet, "what will you do?" "Then according to the conduct of the Messenger of God (i. e. Muhammad)", answered Ma'adh, "And if thou dost not find a provision even therein," asked the Prophet, "how will you act"? "Well, then, I shall make an effort with my own opinion," answered Ma'adh. The Prophet was so delighted at this reply that far from reproaching him, he exclaimed : "Praise be to God who hath guided the envoy of His envoy to what pleaseth the envoy of God". This individual effort of opinion and common sense on the part of an honest and conscientious man is not only a means of developing law, but, as we have seen, has also received the blessing and approval of the Prophet.

The above Tradition of the Prophet Muhammad sums up the sources of Islamic law and which have to be applied by the judges. The basic sources are three (1) Quran, (2) Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad ; (3) Ijtihad and Ijma i. e., interpretation of the above mentioned two sources either by an expert individual scholar or by the consensus of opinion of the learned scholars of a given period of time on a point of law.



In order to facilitate the work of judges, a new institution of Mufti was systematised by Umar the Great. A few famous and trust-worthy scholars were authorised to give legal opinion, on application, without charging any fee. This important institution justified the state in assuming that every citizen knew the law, for it gave a free opportunity to every person to know such legal details which he or she did not already know.

With the codification of Muslim law during the early period of the Abbasid Caliphate, however, very little scope was left to the judges for the exercise of their own individual judgement. In doubtful cases, however, they should refer disputed point to a Mufti.

Judiciary was fully developed during the Abbasid Caliphate. Hitherto the Caliph or his representatives in the provinces used to appoint judges but from the time of the Caliph Mahdi, the office of the Chief Justice was also instituted and the entire judicial function was entrusted to him.

In order to assist the judges in the administration of justice another class of officer was established which was analogous to the notaries public of modern times, and were called *Aadils*. Formerly only witnesses known to be of good repute were accepted. Others were either openly rejected or in case they were absolutely unknown, enquiries were made regarding them from their neighbours. But from the time of Mansur, the second Caliph of the Abbasid Caliphate, a list containing a permanent body of witnesses was prepared by the judges, who were considered fit to be summoned as witnesses. The result was that not merely reliability of character but inclusion in the prepared list as well was considered to be the passport to the witness box. From these witnesses some were chosen as assessors to help the judge in his work. Selection of witnesses became one of the duties of the judge; and on a judge vacating his office, the assessors appointed by him ceased to continue in that capacity.

Since the law applied by the judges was divine in origin, the judge's court was considered a religious institution, and the



divine law was applied to all irrespective of status, race, sex and nationality. Nobody including the highest in the state could secure or demand any preferential treatment. There are several instances in which even the Caliph, the highest Executive authority in the state had to appear before the Judge's court as a mere defendant.

**Diwan-I-Nazar-ul-Mazalim** (The Board for Investigation of Grievances).

So far the dispensation of criminal justice was concerned the Caliph's Court constituted the highest court in the Caliphate. The Prophet and after him his immediate successors heard appeals from all parts of the empire, and investigated into all grievances of the people. The Ummayyad and the Abbasid Caliphs also continued this practice and fixed a particular day in the week for this purpose. Even an ordinary person could have easy access to the Caliph on this particular day. The function of this institution was to set right cases of miscarriage of justice which occurred in the administrative and judicial departments, and further to take cognizance of petitions based upon miscarriage of justice.

According to Al-Mawardi, the following were the duties of this Board.

1. To investigate into the oppressive conduct of the executive authority towards the people and to initiate proceedings *ex-officio*, even if no complaint was made ;
2. Supervision of the officers connected with the finances or taxes, and the officers of the Chancery ;
3. Supervision over the due payment of the salary to the troops ;
4. Return of property unjustly acquired, and
5. Supervision and control of Waqf properties, etc.

The position of the President of this Board was far higher than that of the judge, since the latter stood under his supervision and



received directions from him. The President could himself decide legal disputes, or refer them to the judge (*qadi*) decision, for or make them over to arbitrators. In his decisions unlike the judge ( *qadi* ) he was not bound by the strict letters of the law. He could hear witnesses on either side ; and finally, which was most important, he decided not according to the letter of the law but according to the principles of equity.

#### Muhtasib

In between the office of the President and the *qadi* was the office of *Muhtasib*. His chief duty was to see that the religious and moral precepts of Islam were obeyed ; and to detect offences and punish offenders. Essentially the duties of the *Muhtasib* related to the safe-guarding of public morals and the prevention of commercial knavery. An offence had to be committed in public before the *Muhtasib* could take cognizance of it. He had no right to pry into the secrets of people or exceed the limits of decency.

Al-Mawardi writes that the *muhtasib* were of two kinds, volunteers and paid officials. Their function was to order people to do good and prevent them from committing wrong. In this capacity as the superintendent of markets, the *Muhtasib* went through the city daily accompanied by a detachment of subordinates, inspected provisions to see if they were adulterated and tested weights and measures.

His duties included prevention of nuisance, removal of obstruction from, and encroachment upon public streets, prevention of burying people in lands owned by others, prevention of cruelty to servants and animals, forcing debtors to pay their debts, encouraging regular attendance at the mosque, preventing public eating in the month of fasting (*Ramadhan*) enforcement of the *Iddat* (period of waiting) on widows and divorced women, encouragement of the marriage of unmarried girls, preventing men consorting with women in public, chastising anyone found in a state of drunkenness, and supervision of games, etc.

The *Muhtasib* could only try cases summarily when the truth was not in doubt. If a case required sifting of evidence and



administering of oaths, it had to go to the judge (*qadi*). His functions stood midway between those of the *qadi* and the *Nazar ul Mazalim*; but in rank and power he was inferior to both of them.

#### **Precedents laid down by the Prophet and his immediate followers**

The Holy Prophet and his immediate successors laid down certain precedents in connection with the dispensation of justice and they served as beacon lights for the *qadis* in the performance of their duties.

When Amr b. Hazm was appointed governor of al-Yamen, he was given a letter of instructions which occupies a prominent place in the history of Muslim judicial administration. In this long and exhaustive document Prophet commanded him to dispense justice impartially and to abstain from tyranny and transgression. It also contained detailed provisions for damages in case of corporeal torts.

*Head of State* : There is an important rule of English law that a case cannot be brought against a sovereign for the "king can do no wrong": But Islam does not regard any human being as incapable of making a mistake, and hence above the law. It is for this reason that the Prophet entertained against his own self civil and tort cases; and in the two or three instances recorded by the historians, he had always decided in favour of the claimant or complainant. The Caliph Umar had to appoint full-time judges not only in the provinces but even in the capital Medina. Consequently even the Caliph had to appear in the court if somebody chose to lay his claim or complaint against him. There are recorded cases of this kind not only regarding 'Umar and 'Ali but even regarding Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs.

#### **Procedure**

The Caliph Umar laid down that the *Qadi* should treat all the parties equally: that the burden of proof lay on the plaintiff or the parties equally: that the defendant or accused could swear in the absence of evidence: that the judge could review his own judgement; that the date of hearing should be fixed in advance; that in the absence of the defendant, the case could be decided



*ex parte* and that every Muslim was qualified to give evidence provided that he had not undergone any punishment previously and provided also that his false testimony had not been already proved.

The system of examination-in-chief followed by cross-examination in such a way that one witness might not hear the account given by another was first adopted by, 'Ali. Evidence must be corroborated. The general rule is that there should be at least two male witnesses or one man and two women. Later strict rules were elaborated to check judicial vagaries and to regulate the proceedings of the court and the veracity of witnesses.

Through their long experience the Muslims had evolved a civil and a criminal procedure. On the receipt of a complaint by the court, summons were issued to the defendant or respondent, as the case might be. In the presence of both parties or other advocates issues were framed and the burden of proof was laid on both the contending parties. Then both the sides let in evidence. When the hearing was completed, the judge took some time to investigate the matter through other sources and came to a conclusion. The plaintiff had to produce at least two reliable witnesses to prove his case. Certain types of people were excluded as undependable. In addition to hearing the witnesses and examine the documents, if any, the judge even used to make a private investigation to find out the real truth. Decisions depended primarily on fact and not on legal forms, etc. If a complainant could not produce any witness, the Judge tried to find out the truth by some trick or the other. If he was not so resourceful, he called upon the defendant to declare on oath that the complaint was false. Mere swearing by the complainant was not enough to establish a case. Private investigation by the Judge also played an important part.

#### Quick Disposal of cases

Speed in disposal of judicial work was a conspicuous and prominent feature of the Muslim administration. This was rendered possible by the nature of the system itself. The great bulk



of the petty civil and criminal work was disposed off first by the village organizations and local guilds, and whatever passed beyond them, by the district officers. Consequently the quantity of litigation which went up to the provincial or central courts was incredibly small. This was one of the causes which helped expedition of justice. Then the filing of suits and the procedure of the courts were not overburdened at every step with a multiplicity of formalities to be fulfilled before the suits could come up for trial. Nor was there the ingenious lawyer to delay the process indefinitely by a display of his debating acumen.

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of Islam in its attitude regarding the non-Muslims is the award of social and judicial autonomy. In a long passage of the Quran, we read : "If then they have recourse unto thee (O Muhammad), judge between them or disclaim jurisdiction ; if thou disclaimest jurisdiction, they cannot harm thee at all; if thou judgest, judge between them with equity ; lo : God loveth the equitable. How can they come unto thee for judgement when they have the Torah, wherein God hath delivered judgement for them? Let the people of the Gospel judge by that which God hath revealed therein ; whoso judgeth not by that which God hath revealed ; such are evil liver. And unto thee (O Mhammad) have we revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever scripture was before it, and a watch over it; so judge between them by that which God hath revealed, and follow not their desire away from the truth hath come to thee ; for each we have appointed a Divine Law and a traced out way."

It is on the basis of this commandment that the Prophet and his successors in Islam have conceded to every non-Muslim community, from among the subjects of the Islamic state, a judicial autonomy.

In the time of the Orthodox Caliphs, we find evidence of contemporary Christians attesting to the fact that the Muslim government had abandoned in favour of Christian priests, a great quantity of temporal judicial powers. In the time of the Abbasid



Caliphs we find the Christian patriarch and the Jewish *hakkam*. among the highest dignitaries of the state, connected directly with the Caliph.

In cases of inheritance, marriage, divorce and the like, the Muslims followed their law and the non-Muslims their law ; and the latter's disputes were decided by their own ecclesiastical courts.

The Criminal Law of Islam and the Law of Evidence and Contract applied to both the sections. In the punishment of crimes there was no difference between the rulers and the ruled. The motto of the Islamic state was : "The blood of a non-Muslim subject is like the blood of a Muslim." Islam's law is that of a *dhimmi* is killed by a Muslim, the latter is liable to the same penalty as in the reverse case. In general non-Muslims were left free in their affairs and it is only when disputes among them took a turn which was likely to affect law and order that the Muslim government intervened.

If the parties to a dispute belonged to different communities, a kind of private international law decided the conflict of laws.



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MOSQUE IN ISLAM

Since the same revealed book viz., Quran, provides not only a few religious rituals but also gives directions for all aspects of human activity, it has been inherent in the very character of Islam that religion and politics should go hand-in-hand. The same individual was ruler and chief administrator in the two fields, and the same building, the mosque, was the centre for gravity of both politics and religion. This relationship found expression in the fact that the mosque was placed in the centre of the camp, while the ruler's abode was built immediately adjacent to it, as in Medina, al-Fustat, Damascus, Basra and Kufa:

The objective of the Muslims in accordance with several verses of the Holy Quran is to establish prayers to enjoin good upon the people and to restrain them from committing wrong. In another verse the Muslims have been referred to as the best people and as such entrusted with the abovementioned obligations. These verses are very significant and sum up the entire teaching of the Quran, and the duties of the Muslims. They entail enormous responsibilities on the Head of the State as well as on all the believers and involve the State not only to carry out these orders within its own jurisdiction but also beyond it if occasion arises. In order to fulfil these obligations, the Muslims are required to establish an ideological State based on fraternity, equality, liberty and social justice. For the purpose of practical realization of this ideological State, the institution of Mosque is a fundamental necessity. Although some learned scholars assert that for purposes of prayers mosque is not as fundamental a necessity for Muslims as is the case with the Jews and the Christians, but in my opinion the case is otherwise. The mosque may not be a consecrated institution as is the case with the Synagogue or Church and there may not be priest-hood in Islam as in Judaism and Christianity, yet the Quranic injunction is to establish prayers in a



particular place which is to be called "MASJID". As such the prayers have got to be said in congregation under the leadership of the Head of the State or his representatives in the various mosques of the State. To prove this contention that primarily prayers should be offered in congregation, the Muslims are always enjoined upon to use the word "We" instead of "I", while offering prayers. This means that prayers have got to be offered in congregation and not individually. This is also proved by the practice of the Holy Prophet and his immediate successors who always held the congregational prayers of the believers five times a day in the mosque of Medina. However, in case of illness or other contingencies the individuals are allowed to offer prayers at their homes or other isolated places.

The service of prayer is, however to be performed in congregation in a mosque. While the private part is meant simply for the development of the inner self of man, the public part has other ends as well in view—ends, indeed, that make the Islamic prayer a mighty force in the unification of the human race. In the first place, this gathering of all people living in the same locality five times daily in the mosques, is help to the establishment of healthy social relations. In the daily services these relations are limited to a narrow circle i. e., only to members of the same neighbourhood, but the circle becomes wider in the weekly Friday service which gathers together all Muslim members of a particular locality and still wide in the two great "Id" gatherings; and the culminating point of this gathering reaches on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage when Muslims from all parts of the world assemble together. Thus prayer promotes social relation between the different sections of the Muslim community.

For more important than this, however, is the levelling of social differences brought about by means of congregational prayers. Once within the doors of the mosques, every Muslim feels himself in an atmosphere of equality and love. Before their Maker they all stand shoulder to shoulder, the king along with his poorest subject, the rich arrayed in gorgeous robes with the beggar



clad in rags, the white man with the black. Nay, the king or rich man standing in a back row will have to lay head prostrating himself before God at the feet of a slave or a beggar standing in the front. There could be no greater levelling influence in the world. Differences of rank, wealth and colour vanish within the mosque, and quite a new atmosphere, an atmosphere of brotherhood, equality and love, totally differing from the outside world, prevails within the holy precincts. To be able to breathe, five times daily, in an atmosphere of perfect peace in a world of strife and struggle, of equality in a world where inequality is the order of the day, and of love amid the petty jealousies and enmities of daily life, is indeed a blessing. And these lessons of fraternity, equality and love, when put into practice in daily life serve as foundations for the unification of the human race and of the lasting civilization of mankind. In fact that five daily congregational prayers are meant, among other things, to carry into practice the theoretical lessons of equality, fraternity and social justice for which Islam stands and however much Islam may have preached in words the equality of man and the fraternity of the community of Islam, all this would have remained a dead letter had it not been translated into the every-day life of man through the institution of five daily congregational prayers.

Prayer in Islam, thus not only enables man to realize the Divine in him, not only makes him drink deep at the fountain of Divine morals, purifies his heart and sets him on the right road to the development of human faculties ; but it goes a step further and, levelling all differences, brings about love, concord and a true union of humanity. This last object, it can be easily seen, cannot be achieved without a regularly instituted form of prayer so that all men should gather together in mosques at the stated times and should stand up reverently bow down and prostrate themselves before their great Maker as one.

#### **The Mosques as a Cultural Centre.**

Besides being its religious centre, the mosque is also the cultural centre of the Muslim community. Here the Muslim community is educated on all questions of its welfare. The Friday sermon is a regular weekly lecture on all such questions, but besides



that whenever in the time of the Holy Prophet and his early successors it became necessary to inform the Muslim community on any matter of importance, a sermon or a lecture was delivered in the mosque. Even during his last illness the Holy Prophet came out into the mosque and delivered a sermon to the people.

In addition to this mass education in the Holy Prophet's mosque, there were also arrangements for those who wanted to acquire learning. Men who had to be trained as missionaries for the spread of light and learning in distant parts of the country not only received their education in the mosques but also lodged in a place, called the *Suffa*, attached to the mosque. Many important mosques had also some *Waqf* proper attached to them, their income utilized for the upkeep of the students and their teachers. In later time quite in accordance with the earlier spirit, libraries were also kept in parts of the mosque, and some mosques had very large libraries attached to them containing upwards of 100,000 volumes.

In the time of the Holy Prophet and his early successors the mosque was the only centre of all kinds of Muslim activities. Hence all important national questions were settled. When the Muslim community was forced to take up 'Jihad,' it was in the mosque that measures of defence and expeditions were concerted. It was, again, to the mosque that people were asked to repair when there was news of importance to be communicated. The mosque also served as the council-hall of the Muslims. In the time of Umar when two councils were appointed the Caliph, it was in the Mosque that these councils met. Deputations from Muslim as well as non-Muslim tribes were received in the mosque, and some of the more important deputations were also lodged there. Juridical affairs were also settled in the mosque. The mosque was thus not only the spiritual centre. It was, indeed, their national centre in the truest and most comprehensive sense of the word.

#### Political Significance

The Caliph was the appointed leader of the *salat* and the *Khatib* of the Muslim community. The significance of the mosque for the



state is, therefore, embodied in the *minbar*. The installation of the Caliph consisted in his seating himself upon the seat of the Prophet in his sovereign capacity. When homage was first paid to Abu Bakr by those who had decided the choice of the Prophet's successors, he sat on the *minbar*. He delivered an address, the people paid homage to him a *Khutba*, by which he assumed their leadership; it was the same with Umar and Uthman and Ali.

The *Khutba*, after the glorification of God and the Prophet, contained a reference to the Caliph's predecessor and a kind of formal introduction of himself by the new Caliph. It was the same in the period of the Umayyads and Caliph also took place in the mosque. The revolt against Uthman was staged in the mosque of al-Madina and stones were thrown upon him while he was delivering *Khutba* in the mosque. It was in the mosque of al-Madina also that Ali was elected the 4th Caliph. The meetings of the Shura used to take place in the mosques and all the administrative affairs of the Caliphate used to be carried on from the mosque during the regime of the Pious Caliphate. The Caliph spoke chiefly from the *minbar* and when he made the "pilgrimage" he also spoke from the *miabar* in Mecca and Medina.

In the provinces, the Governor stood in the same relation to the mosques as the Caliph in the capital. He was appointed "over *salat* and sword" or he administered "justice among the people" and the *salat*, he had "Province and Minbar" under him, *al-wilayat wa'l-Khutba*. Speaking from the *minbar* was a right which the Caliph had delegated to him and it was done in the name of the Caliph.

Like the Caliph, the Governor also made his formal entry into office by ascending the *minbar* and delivering a *Khutba*; this was the symbol of his authority. After glorifying God and the Prophet, he announced his appointment or read the letter from the Caliph and the remainder of his address, if there was war going on, was exclusive political and often consisted of crude threats. The *Khutba* was not inseparably connected with the Friday service. The Commander-in-Chief could at any time issue a summons to the *salat* and deliver his *Khutba* with admonitions and orders



and it was the same when he left a province. A Governor, who could not preserve his authority with Khutba was dismissed. Since war was inseparably associated with early Islam and the mosque was the public meeting place of ruler and people, it after became the scene of warlike incidents. Ziyad and Hijjaj were stoned on the *minbar* and it was from the *minbar* that they threatened the people with exemplary measures and thus brought about the pacification of the province under their jurisdiction. It was very natural to mention the name of the reigning Caliph in the Khutba with a blessing upon him on Fridays in the provincial mosques. Under the Abbasids, the custom became the usual form of expressing loyalty to the rule.

There is also evidence that prayers began to be uttered for the heir apparent as well. Thus mentioning the name of the Caliph in the Khutba in all the mosques of the Caliphate assumed a great political significance and in later periods constituted one of the most important *insignia* of sovereignty of the Caliph. The omission of the name of the Caliph from the Khutba by a provincial governor meant the declaration of his independence from the temporal authority of the Caliph. Later on like the blessing upon the ruler the reciprocal cursing of the Alids and the Umayyads in the mosques became general. The first to introduce the official cursing of the Alids from the *minbar* of the Kaba is said to have been Khalid Qasri also. As late as 284 AH. the Caliph al-Mutadid wanted to restore the anathematisation of Muawiya from the Khutba but abandoned the idea. Anathemas were also propounded on rebellious e. g., the Saffarids and the Tulunids, by the Caliph.

#### **The Mosque and Public Administration.**

The actual work of government was very early transferred from the mosque into a special diwan or majlis and negotiations were carried on and business frequently done in the Kasr-al-Impara. But when financial business had to be transacted at public meetings the mosque was used: of this there is particular evidence from Egypt. Hence the Director of Finance used to sit in the Mosque of Amr and auction the farming out of the domains, with a crier and several financial officers to assist him,



In general the mosque and particularly the *minbar*, was the place where official proclamations were made, of course, as was hung upon the *minbar*, message from the Caliph were read with it. Al-Walid announced from the *minbar* the deaths of two distinguished governors; the results of battles were announced in Khutbas. In the Fatimid and Abbasid periods also proclamations, orders, edicts about taxation, etc. by the ruler were announced in the principal mosque. Documents appointing the more important officer were also read upon the *minbar*.

#### **The Mosque as Court of Justice**

A mufti, especially in the large mosques, was also frequently appointed; he sat at fixed times in a *halka li' al-fatwa*, e. g.: in Cairo, in Tunis. In Baghda, Abu Bakr al-Dinawari was the last to give fatwa in the Mosque of al-Mansur according to Sufyan al-Thawri.

In short from the earliest times till to-day, the mosque has been serving not only as a religious and cultural centre of all the Muslims but has also retained some of its past political significance. On a matter of common international affairs of Muslims the mosque is still reserved for ventilating the feelings of the Muslims and in evolving common policy to meet the contingency.







## THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN ISLAM

In order to understand the position of women in Islam it is necessary to take into consideration a few premises which would be helpful in appreciating what will follow.

In the first instance it should be remembered that Islam is not a religion in the sense in which other religions are taken to be religions—religions in which the domains of God and Caesar are quite apart from each other. Islam is a code of life which seeks to regulate every sector of human activity. The Quran says: "Say (Oh Prophet) Surely my worship and my ritual, my sacrifices and my life and my death (everything) is for Allah, the Sustainer of the worlds" (VI : 163).

At the same time it should be clearly understood that all the members of the Islamic brotherhood are bound to seek salvation through efforts, both individual and collective, to implement the teachings of the Holy Quran.

Thus unless and until every sphere of the life of believers is regulated in accordance with the Divine commandments and unless and untill all members, or at least an overwhelming majority of them lead a life in accord with the spirit of Islam, the results aimed at by Islam cannot be achieved. According "to the Holy Quran, to obey some of Divine commandments and to disregard others leads only to failure in this life and in the hereafter."

"Do you believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in another? What then is the reward of such among you as do so but (to meet with) disgrace in the life of this world and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous chastisement?" (II : 85).

Next, we should realise that the Divine commandments contained in the Book of Islam are not ordained in the interest of



individual alone, but in the interest of both the individual and the community. On the one hand, Islam lays down obligations on the individual in the interest of the community and on the other, it imposes responsibilities on the community in the interest of the individual. While the individual is required to make all sorts of sacrifices for the sake of the common good of the society, the social organization is also required to devote all its powers towards improving the lot of the individuals composing it. The result is that the individual has to face a number of disabilities in the interest of the social good which he, realizing his obligations to the group gladly accepts. Thus alone can the community as a whole survive in the struggle for existence and thus alone can the individuals forming a community enjoy a life of happiness and contentment. The last thing to be noted in this connection is that greater the sacrifice that an individual makes in the interest of the society, the greater is the reward promised to him. The individual who makes the supreme sacrifice of laying down his life here for the sake of the community is rewarded in the life of the Hereafter ;

“And say not of those who are slain in Allah’s way (that they are) dead ; on the other hand they are alive ; but you perceive (this) not (I : 154).

A cursory glance at our animate environment will convince anybody that there is going on around us a severe struggle between life and death on this planet. The hand of death is trying constantly to eliminate living beings. Were it allowed to work unchecked for any length of time, Life itself would soon be wiped off the face of the earth. But the Divine purpose aims at running this world upto an Appointed time and Nature is, therefore, constantly producing new living organisms to take the place of those consumed by death.

The main instrument invented by Nature to perpetuate life is sexual activity which results in production of new living beings with the consequence that the activity of Death is negatived and animate nature continues its destined journey in the world.



For the purpose of carrying on sexual activity the plant and animal kingdoms are divided into two different but complementary parts known as male and female. Both the male and female organisms have different anatomical and physiological characteristics for their functions are different ; and full cooperation between these two components of the living world is essential for the production of new living beings.

### **Sex difference in Human life.**

The differentiation of the male and the female has been maintained in the human race as well and human beings are divided into two distinct sexes called men and women, whose anatomy and physiology are different. These differences between the male human being and the female human being can in no way be eliminated. These two categories of humanity, the male and the female can perpetuate the human race by co-operation and not by antagonism.

The famous French surgeon, Dr. Alexis Carrel, says in his famous work, "*Man the Unknown*":

"The differences existing between man and woman are of a more fundamental nature. They are caused by the very structure of the tissues and by the impregnation of the entire organism with specific chemical substances secreted by the ovary. Ignorance of these fundamental facts has led promoters of feminism to believe that both sexes should have the same responsibilities. In reality woman differs profoundly from man. Every one of the cells of her body bears the mark of her sex. The same is true of her organs and above all, of her nervous system. Women should develop their aptitudes in accordance with their own nature without imitating the males. Their part in the progress of civilization is higher than that of men. They should not abandon their specific functions."

In this connection Oswald Schwarz observes in his work, '*The Psychology of Sex*' : "A large part of woman's body is organised for gestation, and if a woman is denied this fulfilment of her physical and mental organization she withers. But in motherhood she acquires a new, a spiritual beauty". And again : "There is in men no



equivalent to the maternal instinct, because men do not need children for their physical or personal completeness." In still another place in the same work he says : "It cannot be denied that the male personality radically differs from the female. It is easy to see that it must be so, because each sex has an existence radically different from the other. This existential difference is represented in the biological sphere, palpably and most conspicuously, by the different sexual functions—fertilization and gestation."

In view of this hard fact, the affairs of life have been divided by Nature into two separate and distinct parts, one of which has been allotted to each of the sexes. Woman has been entrusted with the onerous task of reproducing and nursing life. This is a task which she and she alone can perform. And this is so important a task, which she has to perform in spite of her physical frailty, that she has been with justice absolved of all other responsibilities of life like earning livelihood and working in other spheres of life where hard physical labour has to be put in. Thus the sphere of activity of each of the sexes becomes automatically distinct. The female has to rear and nurture life by confining her activity within a physically limited circle and the male is felt free to move about in all the spheres of life other than that of the female. That is exactly what the following Quranic verse means :

"And (as a matter of routine) you women remain confined to (affairs of) your home" (XXXIII : 33).

This obviously means that ordinarily she should not worry about the affairs outside her home. This however, does not mean that women are debarred from moving outside the four walls of their homes. They can go wherever necessary. There is one thing, of course, which they are not allowed to do and that is roaming about the streets merely to exhibit their personal charms and sartorial embellishments :

"And do not go about displaying yourselves like the displaying of (the days of) ignorance of old" XXXIII : 33).

#### **Complementary Roles**

The part played by the two sexes are complementary to each



other. Man is not superior to woman merely because he is the male nor is the woman inferior to him only because she is the female. Before Divine Law both have essentially an equal status. Both are promised similar rewards if they obey Divine commandments and both are warned against similar chastisement if they disregard those commandments. Says the Holy Quran :

“And the believing men and the believing women are the well wishers of one another ; they enjoin (the doing of) good and forbid (the commitment of) evil and establish prayer and pay the poor tax and they obey Allah and His Messengers. Upon such will Allah shortly bestow Mercy. For surely He is the Mighty and Wise” (IX : 71).

Yet, in spite of all that has been said above on the authority of the Holy Quran, that Book of all times does give some preference to men over women. As for instance :

“The men are the maintainers of women” (IV : 34).

“And for men is above women a degree (in status)” (II : 228).

This superiority of men has reasons for its sanction one of which is explained by the first of the above two verses, viz., that they maintain the household by spending their well-earned wealth. Woman, being the nurse of life, should not, according to the Book of Islam, be overburdened with this responsibility of maintaining the family economically. The family as an organized unit of the community has to be properly managed and to run a system like such as that of the family, there must be at the head a person who should possess the final authority to make decisions in domestic affairs. It is exactly this position that has been assigned to man as the head of the family in virtue of which he is declared to possess a degree of superiority over the woman.

### **Woman's Legal Rights**

Of women's legal rights the Book of Islam gives full details. A general principle is laid down in the following words :



“And for them are rights similar to those (of men) against them” (II : 228).

The most important thing recognised by the book of Islam for the woman is that she has a personality of her own, a fact which is not recognized by any other religious or social system of the world. While in the twentieth century Europe and America a woman is known by her father's name during her maidenhood and by her husband's name after her marriage, like Miss Jones and Mrs. John, in Islam a woman is known by her personal name both before her marriage and after that like Aisha and Fatimah. Says an American judge, Pierre Crabites :

“A Muslim girl may marry ten times, but her individuality is not absorbed by that of her various husbands. She is a solar planet with a name and legal personality of her own.”.

The perfect and complete individuality of the person of the woman is manifest in a most striking manner in the matter of property. According to the Islamic law, the woman possesses an absolute right over her property. If she has attained majority, she may dispose of it according to her will without having recourse to anybody else, her father, brother, husband or son, or any other person. There is no difference in this matter between a man and a woman. The property of a woman cannot be touched even if her husband or father or any other relative has obligations exceeding what he possesses. Similarly, these relatives are not held responsible if she contracts debts. A woman has the same rights as man for acquiring property. She may inherit it, receive it in gift or donation, earn it by her own work and toil ; and all this remains hers, and hers alone. It is she who is the absolute mistress to enjoy it or to give it to whomsoever she likes as a gift, or to dispose of it, by sale or any other legal means. All these rights are inherent in a woman ; there is no question of obtaining them through special contracts with the husband, or by an award depending on somebody else. No power is permitted to deprive her of her legal right in this connection. Says the Holy Quran : “For men is a portion of what is left behind by parents and (other) relatives and for women (also) is a portion of what parents and (other)



relatives leave behind ; whether it is little or much (it is) a fixed portion" (IX : 7).

Woman has, however, been assigned a position a little different from man's in respect of inheritance, as she gets half as much as her brother.

It is perhaps necessary to give an explanation justifying the inequality between sister and brother, between mother and father, and between daughter and son. It seems that the Legislator has taken into consideration the right of a woman in their entirety, together with the fact that laws are framed for normal cases of life and not for rare exceptions. We have already mentioned that the woman possesses her property separately, on which neither her father nor her husband nor any other relative exercises any right whatsoever. Further, in addition to this separation of her proprietary rights, she has the right to maintenance (food, dress, lodging, etc.) ; and the court obliges her husband or father, etc., to satisfy these needs of the woman. Again, the woman obtains from her husband the *dower*, a contractual sum, which remains vested exclusively in the woman herself. This *dower* is not a dowry, which is not an obligatory thing. *Dower* is a necessary element without which no marriage is valid. Thus it will be seen that a woman has lesser material needs to satisfy on her own account than a man, who has heavier obligations in such conditions. It is easy to understand that a man has the right to a greater part of heritage than a woman.

### Marriage

Let us speak of marriage, which also raises numerous questions. Marriage, according to Islam, is a bilateral contract, based on the free consent of the two contracting parties. The parents certainly aid by their counsel and their experience in searching or selecting the companion of life for their children, yet it is the couple who have the last say in the matter.

The Holy Quran has laid down detailed instructions with regard to the mutual relations of the two sexes. In the first instance a cardinal principle is laid down in the following words :



“They (the women) are (like) an apparel for them,” (II : 187) which obviously means that their position is reciprocal. Each of the sexes is the protector of the other. Next, it is stated that both the men and women have similar rights against each other :

“And for them (the women) is the like of what it is against them. (II : 278).”

And then it is laid down that mutual love and affection has been ingrained in human nature. Says the Quran :

“And one of His Signs is that He hath created mates for you from among yourselves so that you may find tranquillity with them and He hath put between you (mutual) love and compassion” (XXX : 21).

“And live with them (women) in a becoming manner” (IV : 19).

“Then either retain them] (women) in a becoming manner or let them go away in a becoming manner” (II : 231).

“And retain them not (in order) to harm (them) that you may exceed (the limits)” (II : 231).

It is quite easy to behave compassionately towards one's companion in life when relations are cordial but when the breaking point is reached in marital relations, it is not physically possible to restrain oneself from bitterness. The Book of Islam enjoins that in case a man decides to divorce his wife even then he should behave towards his wife in a good and kind manner :

“And if you intend to take another wife in place of one and you have already given (the first) one of them a heap of (wealth), then take back nothing out of it (IV : 20).

“And for the divorced women (there should be) provision according to usage—(this is) a duty (enjoined) on those who guard (against evil)” (IV : 20).



“So make some provision for them and give them a good send off.”

### **Annulment of Marriage**

The possibility of the annulment of a marriage also exists in islamic law since all times. There is the unilateral right acquired by husband, to divorce his wife. The wife also may acquire a similar right while contracting the marriage. The court of justice also possesses the right of separation of the couple on the complaint of wife, if the husband is incapable of fulfilling his conjugal duties, or if he is suffering from a particularly serious illness or if he disappears for years without leaving a trace, etc. Further there is also the bilateral separation, when mates agree mutually, on conditions to discontinue their marital tie. The Quran insists that the two mates should refer their quarrels to an arbitration, before deciding for definite separation. The following saying of the Prophet may be remembered: “The most detestable of the permitted things in the eyes of God is divorce”.

### **Polygamy**

In a discourse about women problem of polygamy must also be discussed in the light of the Quran. The problem should be considered as a social problem and not as a problem of the individual woman. In the light of past history it is obvious that among a nation involved in warfare the proportion of the female population is likely to be greater than the male population. This is due to the fact that the male members of a nation are killed in large number in warfare. If in this case one woman is married to one man there will be a surplus of women of marriageable age with the consequence that :

- (a) The surplus women will have to live single lives.
- (b) As a result of this, in order to satisfy their sexual needs and economic requirements they might take to the profession of prostitution which has actually happened every where in the world where monogamy has been enforced ; or



- (c) One man should be allowed to marry more than one woman in which case the surplus female population is provided for.

In this way women can satisfy their sexual needs within the bounds of law, be supported economically and help in the increase of population. It is obvious that of the above three alternatives the last is the only one helpful both to the female element of the society and to the social organisation. That is exactly why Islam has given its sanction to the practice of polygamy. In allowing polygamy in other emergent cases, the Islamic law is more elastic and more in harmony with the requirements of society than the other systems in law which do not admit polygamy in any case. Supposing there is a case in which a woman has young children, and falls chronically ill becoming incapable of doing the household work. The husband has no means of employing a maid servant for the purpose, not to speak of the natural requirements of the conjugal life. Supposing also that the ailing woman gives her consent to her husband to take a second wife, and that a woman is found who agrees to marry the individual in question. Western law would rather permit immorality than a legal marriage to bring happiness to this afflicted home.

In fact, Muslim law is nearer to reason. For, it admits polygamy when a woman herself consents to such a kind of life. The law does not impose polygamy, but only permits it in certain cases. It depends solely on the agreement of the woman. It goes without saying that the second woman may refuse to marry a man who has already one wife. As to the first wife, the act of polygamy depends on her too, for, at the time of her marriage she may demand the acceptance and insertion, in the document of the nuptial contract, of the clause that her husband would practise monogamy. Such a condition is as valid as any other of a legal contract.

It should, however, be remembered that the permission to practise polygamy is coupled with the condition that the husband should treat his wives equally in matters of maintenance and support :



“And if you do fear that you shall not (be able to) do justice (to all) then confine yourselves to one (wife only) (IV : 3).

And further :

“So be not disinclined (from one of your wives) with utter disinclination so that ye leave her in (utter) suspense” (IV-129).

Polygamy, however, is not the rule, but only an exception; and this exception has multifarious advantages, social as well as other, and the Islamic law is proud of this elasticity.

### **Segregation of Sexes**

The Quran lays down restrictions on women. These have been imposed not to deprive them of liberty, but to enable them to devote all their attention to the reproduction and nursing of human life. The Quran says : “And (as a matter of routine) remain confined to (the affairs of) your homes and go not about exhibiting (yourselves) as the exhibiting of (the days of ignorance of old” (XXXIII : 33).

This verse lays down two cardinal principles, viz., that women should ordinarily confine their activities within their homes and that they should not move out of door with a view to exhibiting their charms. This obviously means that their moving out of door is not absolutely banned. At the same time, it is laid down that they should observe some precautions when they move out. For example the Quran says !

“Oh Prophet ! Say unto thy wives and thy daughters and (unto) the women of the believers that they should let down their outer garments. That is more appropriate, for (thus) they will be known (as respectable ladies) and will not (therefore) be given (any) trouble (by the evil minded) and (remember that Allah is All Forgiving (and) Merciful” (XXXIII : 59).

The above verse clearly lays down that when a lady belonging to a respectable family moves out of doors she should be so clad as



to give the lookers on the impression that she is quite respectable which obviously means that the very outward look of a lady should be full of dignity and as a corollary one must take it that a respectable lady should not dress herself in a way which may make her look like a woman of loose moral character.

In order to maintain the sanctity of home, some other injunctions have also been mentioned in the Quran :

“O ye who believe ! Enter not the homes other than your own homes until you have asked for permission ; and it has been expressly given (XXIV : 24).

“Why when you have to ask them for anything do ask them from behind a curtain ; that is purer (both) for your minds and their minds” (XXXIII : 53).

And then a woman, who has been addressed by a stranger from behind the curtain, is advised to speak to him in a rather stern voice :

“And be not (too) polite in (your speech to a stranger) least he in whose heart is a disease may expect something from you” (XXX : 32)

Next, the close relatives who live under the same roof are enjoined to keep their gazes downward as a matter of routine and not to stare at one another.

Say unto the believing men that they cast down their gazes and say unto the believing women that they also keep their gazes cast down (XXXIV : 30).

Thus, while the natural freedom of women has not been curbed, such restrictions have been imposed upon their conduct as well as those of men which are conducive to the maintenance of a healthy moral atmosphere in the society, and is germane to the consolidation of the institution of family and to a happy and peaceful domestic life.



## SLAVERY AND ISLAM

The Institution of Slavery appears to have existed since very early times as a thorn by the side of the glorious tradition of mankind. Probably, it came into being during the neolithic age as a result of the subjugation of settled agricultural folk by the marauding nomads as the latter may have desired to enjoy an easy fruit through exploitation of the former's labour instead of killing him outright. It is, in all its probability, a by-product of another evil of human society namely war ; both resulting from human greed to feed on the wealth and labour of other people and from time immemorial both were generally regarded as pernicious but unavoidable. It would, therefore, seem that slavery is as old as human society.

The traces of slavery are visible in all ages of known history. The Pharaohs of Egypt enslaved the Jews. The Greeks recognised two kinds of it—the praedial servitude and household slavery. The Romans built a gigantic empire on the basis of slavery and serfdom, the latter bound down with the farmland and were sold along with it. The Hebrews possessed two types of slaves—one given into bondage as a penalisation for crimes or non-payment of debt, and the other of alien birth purchased or captured in wars and raids. The Jewish law allowed the penalised slave liberty after the servitude of six years or so ; but the foreign slaves were kept in bond through generations. According to an ancient Greek proverb the day of enslavement deprives man of half of his manhood and Professor Toynbee says that this was terribly fulfilled in the debasement of the slave-descended urban proletariat of Rome, which lived not by bread alone but by, bread and shows, from the second century B. C. to the sixth of the Christian Era. The serfs or the halots of the soil and the slaves of the house were hated, despised and belaboured like drag-animals and in the words of Syed Ameer Ali “lived a life of perpetual drudgery in the service of pitiless masters”.

The pious soul of Jesus Christ cried against this inhuman institution. But as Christianity gradually developed after him into a



creed and social system, it chose to ignore the testament of the master and raised no protest against the pitiable lot of the slaves, nor framed any rule or principle to mitigate their hardship. Rather the Christian leaders enjoined on the slaves absolute submission to the will of the holder of his bond. Under the Roman law, slaves were mere chattels and so they remained in the domains of the Christians.

Under the Romans, slave was a property of the owner, subject to torture, lashing and even capital punishment for most trivial of faults. In the Christian Roman empire, slavery was recognised as a natural institution and the code fixed the maximum price of slaves in accordance with the training and profession of the incumbent. Marriage between slaves was illegal and mixed marriages between slaves and free were prohibited under severe penalties. The result of this suppression of natural human instinct no wonder, was more horrible than the consequences feared in their allowance. Unrestricted concubinage and licentiousness not only degraded the society but also soiled the good name of many a clergy.

Still gloomier was the picture when the Scandoinavian and Germanic races or the barbarian hordes as they were called seized upon Europe and raised their heads on the ruins of the Roman empire. Not satisfied with personal slavery, they set up territorial servitude on the people. The various rights of the feudal lords over their vassals and serfs exhibited a revolting picture of moral depravity and degradation.

In medieval Europe, the Church itself held slaves and serfs and justified it as check on the increase of pauperism and theft. Inhuman treatment of the slaves by the latterly Christian Americans before the abolition of slavery was but an extension of this Church tradition to the colonies, which still partially survives in the colour prejudice of the most cultured white races of our day. Indeed, the grasp of the Christians on the spirit of Christianity proved anything but shallow in this regard and the master's teaching that "Men are equal in the sight of Lord" was honoured not even within the precinct of the Church where black and white cannot pray together.

The Islamic teachings dealt a blow at the institution of slavery which, had it not been for the deep root it had taken among the



surrounding nations and the natural obliquity of the human mind, would have been completely extinguished as soon as the generation which then practised it had passed away. It has been justly contended that, as the promulgation of the laws, precepts, and teachings of Islam extended over twenty years, it is naturally to be expected that many of the pre-Islamic institutions, which were eventually abolished, were at first either tacitly permitted or expressly recognised. In one of these categories stood the usage of slavery. The evil was intertwined with the inmost relations of the people among whom Prophet Mohammad (Peace be on him) flourished. Its extinction was only to be achieved by the continued agency of wise and humane laws, and not by the sudden and entire emancipation of the existing slaves which was morally and economically impossible.

Numberless provisions, negative as well as positive were accordingly introduced in order to promote and accomplish a gradual introduction of the basic reforms. A contrary policy would have produced an utter collapse of the infant commonwealth.

It is said that Islam did not issue a charter, abolishing slavery outright, and the practice of the early Muslims is quoted as a strong argument in support of this theory. But neither of these facts is correct: Islam declared without any ambiguity that man is free and he should not accept the bondage of any other man: he was commanded to bow down and constitute one brotherhood without any religious distinction. There are numerous verses in the Quran bearing out the above concept, for instance: "Mankind was one nation, though it was divided. And your Lord has ordained that you should not worship any one except him. There is no rule but of God. He has decreed that you should worship none but him. Now as regards the actual problem of slavery, the best thing is to seek a direct reference about it in the Quran, without offering any apology. The Quran does not allow the enslavement of any citizen for any reason within the bounds of the Muslim State. It also does not allow the persecution, arrest or enslavement of civilians in a foreign territory by the Muslim troops. It is obvious, therefore, that the Quran always speaks of slaves as those whom your right hands have acquisition of bondsmen or bondswomen. It recognises



in part only one kind of slavery, the servitude of persons made captive in bonafide lawful warfare (Jihad Sharia). The only way by which one can enter the Islamic State as a slave is war. Only prisoners of war could be made slaves. About these war-prisoners the Quran says that the State could slay them or imprison them or free them with or without ransom. These were the various alternatives. The Head of an Islamic State could adopt any one of them depending on the prevailing situation. In actual practice during the Pious Caliphate, all these alternatives were adopted. But in most cases the prisoners were distributed among the Muslim soldiers as slaves. There were two reasons for it. The one was that there were no proper arrangements in those days to keep large numbers of people in prisons ; the second was that the Muslims thought that if the prisoners were given to individuals they might, in due course, embrace Islam and become good citizens. The second consideration often prevailed and Islamic history can give brilliant examples of freed slaves who played glorious role in its making and development. The last remedy against the evil was to abolish the practice of distributing prisoners if the combatants could be trusted that they would not renew their previous hostility. In this respect Hazret Umar took the first step by liberating all these prisoners who had been captured during the wars against false prophets and apostates. The next step he took was to release the prisoners in the conquered countries if they agreed to live in peace under the protection of the Muslim rulers,

Although slavery could not be abolished totally during this period, yet all kinds of measures were adopted for the emancipation of slaves. The Prophet exhorted his followers repeatedly in the name of God to enfranchise slaves, and said that "there was not an act more acceptable to God than this." He ruled that for certain sins of commissions the penalty should be the freeing of slaves. He ordered that slaves should be allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their service ; and that in case the unfortunate being, had no present means of gain, and wanted to earn in some other employment enough for that purpose, they should be allowed to leave their masters on an agreement to that effect. He also provided that sums should be advanced to the slaves from the



public treasury to purchase their liberty. He placed the duty of kindness towards the slave on the same footing with the claims of "kindred and neighbours and fellow passengers and wayfarers, encouraged manumission to the freest extent and therewith the gift of "a portion of that Wealth which God hath given you ;" and prohibited sensual uses of a master's power over the slave, with the promise to divine mercy to the wronged. To free a slave is the expiation for ignorantly slaying a believer, and for certain forms of untruth. The whole tenet of Prophet's teachings made permanent chattelhood or caste discrimination impossible ; and it is simply an abuse of words to apply the word slavery, in the English sense, to any status known to the legislation of Islam.

The Law giver ordained, that a fugitive coming to the territories of Islam should at once become enfranchised ; that the child of a slave woman should follow the condition of the father, while the mother should become free at his death ; that the slave should be able to contract with his master for his emancipation ; and that a part of the poor-tax should be devoted to the ransom of those held in bondage. The masters were forbidden to exact more work than was just and proper, They were ordered never to address their male or female slaves by the degrading appellation, but by the more affectionate name of my young man, or my young maid, ; it was enjoined that all slaves should be dressed, clothed, and fed exactly as their masters and mistresses. Above all, it was ordered that in no case should the mother be separated from her child, nor brother from brother, nor father from son, nor husband from wife, nor one relative from another,

When the slave girl was taken as wife by her master and she gave birth to a child, it became obligatory on the master to respect her person ; he could no longer dispose her of as a slave and she became free automatically after his death. Also the children which were born in this condition were free citizens and enjoyed the right of inheritance as the children of a free woman.

For those who were already slaves, Hazrat Umar made provisions which put them at par with their masters. While assigning pensions to the heroes of Badr and other battles he also gave annuity



to the slave equal to that of their master, and the same principle was observed on other occasions. One of the instructions to the officials was that they must visit the slaves who were ill. If they failed to do so sometimes they were dismissed for committing this offence. Hazrar Umar used to invite slaves to dine with him and to say loudly enough for those present to hear that curse of God be upon those who felt ashamed to mix with the slaves. The army commanders were instructed that if a slave gave protection to any people, it should be regarded as it had been given by all the Muslims, and the Army must abide by it. To one commander he wrote : "A slave of a Muslim is one of the Muslims. The protection given him is their protection and must be honoured".

The treatment meted out to slaves and their sons was so humane that it led to the rise of great geniuses from among them who were held in high esteem throughout the Empire. Usama was the first Commander of the forces appointed by Hazrat Abu Bakr and all the principal companions were put under his command. Akramah, who among the Imams of Hadith and to whom Abdulla b. Abbas had given the degree of juris-consult, and Naf'i, who was the teacher of Imam Malik and whose chain of reporters is called the golden chain by authorities of Hadith literature, had both been slaves. The slavery which was allowed in Islam, had, in fact, nothing in common which was in vogue in Christendom until recent times, or with American Slavery until the holy war of 1865 put an end to that course.

In Islam the slave of to-day is the grand wazir of to-morrow. He may marry, without discredit, his master's daughter, and become the head of the family. Slaves have ruled kingdoms and founded dynasties. The father of Mahmud of Ghazna was a slave ; Qutbuddin the first king of Delhi, and the true founder, therefore, of the Muslim empire in India was a slave. It is strange coincidence of history that when the Muslim Empire along with all its accumulated legacy of culture and civilization was being destroyed by the infidel Mongols of China, the only Saviors that stood for the cause of Islam and Muslims were the two slave Dynasties of the Mamluks of Egypt and the slave kings of India. It were they who saved Islam and Muslims from utter annihilation.



### Marriage of Slaves

Before Islam slave girls served either as soules tools satisfying the master's carnal passions and were divested of all rights or were used for earning money for him through prostitution. Both these evil practices were abolished immediately and order was given that both free men and slaves, male as well as female, should remain in a married state :

“And marry those among you who are single and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves and do not compel your slave-girls to prostitution when they desire to keep chaste, in order to seek the frail goods of this world's life (XXIV : 32-33). The order to keep the male as well as female slaves in a married state is here combined with the order which puts an end to prostitution, and thus these two evil practices of pre-Islamic Arabia were put to an end by the one clear injunction that they shall be married.

True, the master still had he right to establish sexual relations with the slave-girls. But this right was hedged with so many conditions that the status of such a slave girl was rendered almost equal to that of the free wife. For, she had specific rights and privileges one of which was that any slave girl who had given birth to a child automatically became free after the death of her master. Her child too was regarded as free and had all the rights of free man, including that of becoming the Caliph of Muslims. Among the numerous great Muslim Caliphs born of slave-girls one might mention the name of al-Mamun, the celebrated Abbasid Caliph.

The case of the master of female slave who would himself have sexual relations with her differs only in one respect, viz. that he being himself her master, does not stand in need of permission from anybody else. The Prophet's example, however, shows that when a prisoner of war was elevated to the dignity of wifehood, she was also set free. It was in this manner that he took two ladies who were prisoners of war as wives. He set an example in this matter, and the faithful were enjoined to take him for an example (XXXIII: 216) and imitate him. Nay, his acting in this manner was undoubtedly based on his interpretation of the Quranic revelation, and that



interpretation, of which the proof exists in his act, must be followed by all Muslims. The Prophet most emphatically laid it down that the master of a slave-girl should educate her and set her free and marry her. The Holy Prophet said : "There are three persons for whom there is a double reward ; a person belonging to Ahl-al-Kitab who believes in his own Prophet and believes in Muhammad and the slave owned by another when he performs his obligations towards his master, and the man who has a slave-girl with him then he teaches her good manners and instructs her with polite accomplishments and educates her, then sets her free and marries her."

A good deal of criticism has been made by people against this practice which is dubbed as concubinage, which is not correct. These critics forget that under the prevailing circumstances this right granted by Islam to the slave-girls was in keeping with the realistic attitude of Islam towards human problems. Those who are conversant with what happens after wars in the present times will appreciate the realistic solution offered by Islam.



## THE STATUS OF NON-MUSLIM IN ISLAM

In order to understand the position of non-Muslims in an Islamic state, it is essential to understand the nature of such a state itself. The fundamental difference between Islamic and other states is, that in the former sovereignty belongs to Almighty God while in other states it essentially belongs to human beings. This does not, however, mean that in an Islamic state all the laws are framed by God Himself or that the Holy Book of Islam provides all positive laws. There are, however, certain commandments, prohibitions and guiding principles which have been explicitly laid down in the Quran, e. g., regarding matrimonial relations, inheritance, etc, and they have to be incorporated in Muslim legal codes without any alteration. As for legislation on questions in respect of which Islam is silent, it has been left at the discretion of the legislative organ of the Islamic state. This legislation, however, must never conflict with the fundamentals of Islam as laid down in the Quran and the Sunnah. Thus we can conclude that in an Islamic state human beings have limited rights of sovereignty, while in all other states they arrogate to themselves unlimited sovereign rights.

It would be a fallacy to compare the Islamic state with any of the modern states as it occupies unique position and stands as a class by itself. Since it recognizes only the sovereignty of God and does not believe in unrestricted man-made laws its object is to put an end to the rule of human beings over other human beings. Moreover, since Islam embraces the totality of human life, Islamic state inherently refuses to recognize compartmentalization of life into spiritual and temporal sectors. In addition, although it is a religious state, it is totally different from theocracy as understood in the Christian tradition where a certain section of religious people had arrogated to itself, in the name of religion, absolute powers over and against the rest of the people. On the contrary in an Islamic state even the head of the state is not law-giver ; he is merely an executor of Divine law.



Since the Islamic state is basically an ideological state, only those persons are to be *primarily* entrusted with its administration who believe in its ideology, and are conversant with its spirit, and have dedicated themselves to the promotion of the objectives of the State. And since Islam is the basic ideology of the state, it is Muslims alone who can be genuinely expected to dedicate themselves fully to running such a state, and undergoing all sacrifices that might come in the way of keeping that state a going concern. This does not mean that the Islamic State taboos the utilization of non-Muslims in the service of the state. This only means that while availing of the services of non-Muslims, due care should be taken that the Islamic character of the state is not compromised and the ideological demands are not sacrificed at the altar of so-called "tolerance". This is possible only if the basic policy-making positions are held by those who are deeply and wholeheartedly committed to Islam. In this respect the Islamic state may be regarded as having something in common with the Communist state, but the cruel treatment meted out by the Communist Party to non-Communists is conspicuous only for its absence in Islamic societies. For Islam does not believe in forcing others to embrace its religion, culture and traditions, nor does it believe in employing hypocritical nationalists slogans with a view to destroying the distinct cultural and religious identity of non-Muslim communities living in lands under Muslim dominance.

In accordance with a verse of the Quran : "It is He who hath created you and of you are some that are disbelievers and some that are believers. (LXIV : 2), the subjects of an Islamic state are classified into these two categories. These disbelievers are those who do not believe in the existence of God Almighty and in the Hereafter. The followers of this godless cult are fundamentally opposed to all beliefs in the establishment of peace by liberating mankind from all shackles of slavery, mental or physical, is the worst enemy of this godless cult which by not allowing liberty of conscience, keeps human beings under mental bondage. So long as this cult survives, Islam cannot flourish and will not be able to achieve its ideals ; and, therefore, as a moral force, it is directly opposed to this evil force. Hence this godless cult has been described in the Holy Quran as mischief (*fitnah*) which must be rooted out from the universe so that the re-



ligion of God may flourish.

Among the 'believers' there are two kinds : firstly, those who believe in all the previous revealed religions and their Prophets, and also in Islam as the last religion and Prophet Muhammad as the last Prophet ; and secondly, those who believe in their own revealed books and Prophets, but not in Islam.

In the light of the above facts, let us examine the position of those who do not adhere to the fundamentals of the Islamic state. Such people are technically called protected people (*dhimmi*). They are those non-Muslims who live under the protection of the Islamic state, or have been forced to submit by conquest. As for defending the state, enforcing the laws of Islam, and spreading the ideology of Islam, non-Muslims have nothing to do with all these responsibilities. They only agree to live in peace and tranquillity under the protection of the Islamic state. Since in this state preference is given to those even among the Muslims who have rendered more services and have made greater sacrifices for its cause, it is but natural that the protected people who neither believe in its ideology nor are prepared to share equal responsibilities with the Muslims, will have different rights, privileges and duties from those enjoyed by the Muslim citizens. Consequently in this state each class of people will have its advantages and disadvantages. The Islamic state, however, guarantees to these people the full security of their lives and property, and free exercise of their religious rites, and in return they agree to contribute a nominal annual tax, commonly known as *jizyah*. This tax not only entitles them to enjoy the above rights but also entitles them to secure exemption from military service to the state, which is obligatory on every able-bodied Muslim citizen. This tax is imposed only upon those non-Muslims who are incapable of rendering military service. All persons above the age of 50 and below the age of 16, women, children religious functionaries, the poor, the destitute and the disabled are exempted from the payment of this tax. If the protected people are willing to render military service they would be exempted from the payment of this tax. The Great Caliph 'Umar issued orders that if any non-Muslim rendered military service to the state even once in a year, he was to be exempted from the payment of *jizyah* for that year.



Thus, it is open to the protected people themselves to acquire the same rights in this connection as is enjoyed by the Muslim citizens. If the Muslim authorities at any stage find themselves unable to give protection to such people, the *jizyah* is not to be levied upon them, and if it has already been collected, it must be returned to them. The amount of *jizyah* varied from class to class from approximately Rs. 6 to Rs. 12 per annum. So careful was the Great Umar about them that after the collection of *jizyah* he used to summon ten people from Basrah and ten from Kufa and make them swear that they had not imposed any hardship on the non-Muslims in the collection of this tax.

It would be worthwhile mentioning the terms which were offered by the Holy Prophet to the members of the protected faith in return for the tax (*jizyah*) imposed upon them :

1. If they are attacked by an enemy, the Muslims will defend them.
2. They will not be dissuaded from their religion.
3. They will not be required to go personally to the tax collector for payment of tax (*jizyah*).
4. Their lives will be secure.
5. Their wealth, goods and cattle will be secure.
6. Their trading caravans will be secure.
7. Their lands will be secure.
8. All that they possessed will be secure.
9. Their religious leaders will not be removed from their positions.
10. Their crosses and churches will not be damaged.
11. Military force will not be sent to their lands.
12. They will not be asked to deviate from their religious belief.
3. None of the rights they have been enjoying will be infringed upon.



These terms cover the whole position of the protected people under the Islamic state. Hence we can conclude that so far as responsibilities in respect of the defence of the state is concerned, the members of the protected faith are even in a more advantageous position than the Muslims themselves. While the former could be exempted from military service on payment of a nominal tax, the latter, under no circumstances, could enjoy such exemption.

In the beginning in matters of taxation from land there was, however, some discrimination between the two classes of people. Muslims were charged only  $1/10$  of the produce from the land which was in their possession while the non-Muslim land-holders were charged *Khiraaj* which amounted from  $1/5$  to  $1/2$  of the produce. Here too the concession granted to the Muslims was nullified by the edict of the Great 'Umar who decreed that Muslims should not only be prevented from taking possession of the conquered land, but should also be debarred from acquiring it from the hands of non-Muslims.

If the non-Muslims submitted to the Muslim conquerors before their conquest, they were left in possession of their goods, cattle, wealth and landed property. If, on the other hand, they were conquered, their goods, cattles and all their possessions that fell into the hands of Muslim warriors constituted a lawful prize for the victors and were distributed equally among the Muslim soldiers as booty. But in accordance with the ordinance of Hazrat Umar, the captured lands from the non-Muslims were not to constitute part of the booty and as such were not to be distributed among the Muslim warriors. They were to be left in possession of non-Muslims who were required to pay *Khiraaj* which was fixed according to the productivity and nature of the soil, and its proximity to the market. They were either charged a fixed share of the produce ranging from  $1/2$  to  $1/5$  or a fixed rental value. The *Khiraaj* was levied on land irrespective of whether the owner was a minor or adult, free or slave, male or female. The rates fixed by the Great 'Umar were not to be enhanced. In case where there was no precedent, the *Khiraaj* was assessed according to the tax-bearing capacity of the lands, and as the limit of tax-bearing capacity was fixed by Hanafite doctors at half of the entire produce, in no case more than this could be charg-



ed from the cultivators. The rate could be reduced but could not be increased in any case. However the *Khiraj* could, in no case, fall short of one fifth of the entire produce. The assessor of *Khiraj* in estimating the amount of tax to be levied on a piece of land would take into consideration the quality of land, the kind of crops and the method of irrigation, and also the distance of the land from the cities and markets. The *Khiraj* was assessed on the area of the land, or on the area of the cultivated portion of the land, or finally, on the produce as a definite proportion of the same. When anyone of these three alternatives had been settled, no change was permitted and hence the tax was not increased or decreased so long as the land continued to remain the same in respect of the condition of its irrigation and other advantages that it enjoyed.

It was not obligatory on any non-Muslim to cultivate land as it was purely contractual affair between the non-Muslims and the state. However, they were granted full proprietary, permanent and inalienable rights on their lands. Their lands could not be purchased by the Muslims who were debarred from acquiring it. Even the government could not acquire such land for state purposes without the consent of the owner. The original Muslim land owners were charged only *ushr*, i. e., one tenth of the produce. They were, however, very few. Moreover, the *ushr* had to be charged on every crop that could be grown during the course of the year, and in no circumstances could it be remitted.

When Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, the pious Umayyad Caliph noticed that a large numbers of Muslims had purchased landed property from non-Muslims and as such were claiming exemption from the *Khiraj* and were paying only *ushr* or 1/10 of the produce, he invited the opinion of the Muslim jurists and settled the matter in such a way that the Muslims and practically to pay the same amount as was charged from the non-Muslims ; and at the same time it was in accordance with the divine laws (*Shariah*). Therefore it can safely be concluded that so far as the landed property was concerned, it was to remain in possession of the non-Muslim , and if the Muslims wanted to cultivate land, they had to pay the same amount of tax which was charged from the non-Muslims. Besides this, the Mus-



lms had to pay an additional tax known as *zakat* which amounted to two and a half percent on the accumulated income of every Muslim citizen at the end of the year. The non-Muslims were exempted both from military service, as well as from the payment of this tax.

### **Social and Cultural Autonomy**

Perhaps the most striking feature of Islam, in respect of its attitude towards the non-Muslims, is the award of social and judicial autonomy. In a lengthy passage of the Quran, we read :

“If then they have recourse unto thee (o Muhammad), judge between them or disclaim jurisdiction ; if thou disclaimest jurisdiction, then they cannot harm thee at all ; but if thou judgest, judge between them with equity. Lo ! God loveth the equitable. Let the people of the Gospel judge by that which God hath revealed therein ; whose judgeth not by that which God hath revealed : such are evil livers. And unto thee (to Muhammad) have We revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and watch over it, so judge between them by that which God hath revealed, and followed not their desires away from the truth which hath come to thee ; for we have appointed a Divine law (Shariah) and a traced out way ; had God willed He could have made you one community, but He may try you by that which He hath given you : so vie one with another in good works ; unto God Ye will all return, and he will then inform you of that wherein Ye differ.”

(Quran v : 42-48)

It is on the basis of this commandment, that the Prophet and his successors in Islam have granted judicial autonomy to every non-Muslim community, from among the subjects of the Islamic state. In the time of the Orthodox Caliphs, for instance, we find contemporary Christian sources attesting, that the Muslim government had abandoned, in favour of Christian priests, a good deal of temporal judicial jurisdiction. In the time of the Abbasid Caliphs we find the Christian patriarch and the Jewish Hakham among



the highest dignitaries of the State, connected directly with the Caliph.

In the time of the Prophet, the Jews of Medina had their Bait al Madaris (an educational institute). In the treaty with the Christians of Najran, the Prophet had given the guarantee not only for the security of the person and property of the inhabitants, but had also expressly left the nomination of bishops and priests to the Christian community itself.

If a Muslim murdered a non-Muslim, he was to be handed over to the successors of the latter for retaliation. The civil cases of the non-Muslims were decided according to their own laws, and by their own courts. These courts were exclusively ecclesiastical. The heads of the Churches acted as judges. Their jurisdiction extended not merely to marriage and inheritance but also to most of the disputes. The non-Muslims, in addition to that, were also allowed to seek justice in a Muslim court if they so desired. But once they had submitted their case to a Muslim court, they were not allowed to withdraw it. The Muslim authorities were not allowed to interfere with the personal laws, e.g., laws of inheritance of the non-Muslims. No Christian or Jew could inherit from a Muslim, and no Muslim from a Christian or Jew. This meant that the children of non-Muslims if they embraced Islam, had to be disinherited. If a non-Muslim left a will for the construction of his own place of worship it was allowed. The goods of an heirless protected subject were to devolve upon the members of his own community, while those of an heirless Muslim were to go to the Central Treasury of the Government.

The Government never interfered with the modes of worship of the protected subjects; in fact, it looked with favour upon the frequent noisy celebration of Christian feasts. In the case of the failure of rain, the Government actually ordered processions of Christians with their Bishop at the head, and of Jew with trumpeters. Monasticism continued in peaceful prosperity. Every community, of whatever persuasion, even if it consisted of only ten souls, was permitted to choose its own religious leader with the Caliph's recognition. The persons of these religious leaders were to be regarded as sacred



and they were to be regarded irremovable from their posts, and were also exempted from the payment of *jizyah*.

The Christians were allowed to maintain and repair their Churches and also to construct new ones. Only in those towns which were populated by the Muslims, they were not allowed to construct new churches ; but practice shows that this law was also relaxed in their favour. Several new churches were constructed in Baghdad which was founded by the Muslims.

As stated above, since the non-Muslims did not believe in the Islamic ideology they could not be given any key position in the administration of the government ; and they had also to be excluded from all such posts which involved the performance of religious duties. But later on, with the multiplicity of offices, and separation of various departments, they got more than their due share in government service. In such lucrative occupations as banking, large commercial ventures, linen trade, land ownership, medical profession, etc., the Christians and Jews were well represented and firmly established. In fact, the most amazing feature of the Abbasid Caliphate has been the preponderating number of non-Muslims. Their number had reached such an extent that it seemed as if the Muslims were being ruled by the members of the protected faiths in their own state. Even the highest executive posts, viz., vizarate and Chief Secretary were being held by the non-Muslims who were only debarred from those services which dealt with purely religious affairs.

In fact in safeguarding the rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic state has gone to such extremes, as to give them the liberty of maintaining even those practices which are entirely opposed to the teachings of Islam. For instance, the consumption of intoxicants is forbidden to Muslims, yet the non-Muslim inhabitants of the country have full liberty, not only of consumption but also of its manufacture, import, and sale. The same is true of games of chance and contracts entailing usury.

Muslim tradition insists strongly that the non-Muslims are to be treated kindly. The Prophet said : "If anyone wrongs a man to



whom a treaty has been granted or burdens him above his strength, I will advocate against him on the day of judgement." Abu Bakr said, "If a province or people receive you, make an agreement with them and keep your promise. Let them be governed by their laws and established customs; and take tribute from them as is agreed between you. Leave them in their religion and their land." The Caliph 'Umar, treated non-Muslims very kindly and justly. While imposing taxes upon them he was very careful that enough was left for their maintenance. Even on the eve of his death he did not forget them and left instructions to his successors that he should treat the non-Muslims justly and that he should keep the agreements contracted with them; and that he should fight their enemies in order to protect them, and that he should not overburden them with taxation. [Such] were the injunctions of the Holy Prophet and his immediate successors who put the ideals of their Master in actual practice.



## **CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PAKISTAN**

Wherever the Muslim conquerors established their rule, they took the political ideology of Islam with them. Islamic ideology is based on strong belief in the Unity of God. This doctrine is the very core of Islam and from this basic concept, all other tenets, principles and injunctions flow, as from life-source. According to Muslim belief God Almighty has revealed His Will through His chosen messengers and has thus given us express commands to do certain things and to abstain from certain others. Through His revelation He has shown us how our individual and collective life should be ordered. He has not left the guidance of people even in their social affairs to the whims of the rulers, or merely to the process of counting of heads, for sovereignty essentially belongs to God and to God alone. As Muslims we cannot treat any other authority, human or supernatural, whether parliaments, states or king, as our real Sovereign, all obedience and loyalty are subject to our primary and supreme loyalty to God and to His commands, as revealed through Prophet Muhammad. (Peace be on him). Obedience to other authorities can be rendered only in so far as their commands do not go against the Divine commands. The doctrine of one God is thus pregnant with tremendous political significance. It does away completely with the Divine right to kings and the absolute, unlimited rights of rulers, peoples, and parliaments. The Muslims cannot, by virtue of a sheer majority or even of unanimity, change one iota of the legal and moral precepts of the Quran. According to a verse of the Holy Quran, "Obey God, obey the Prophet and obey those in authority from amongst yourselves; but if there is any disagreement then turn to God and the Prophet (for decision)." Thus God and the Prophet i.e. the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet, are final in all matters of dispute.

Although Muslim rulers deviated a little from their standards of an ideal Islamic state immediately after the termination of the



rule of the four immediate successors of the Holy Prophet by replacing the elective system of the hereditary succession. It did not, however, materially effect the Muslim society on account of the maintenance of the supremacy of the Divine Law. As soon as the Muslim rulers introduced the hereditary system of succession, the right of legislation was taken away from them and was entrusted to the learned scholars. Thus the Muslim rulers were deprived of overriding the Divine Law by making laws of their own choice. They were only left with the authority of its execution. They had to submit themselves to the supremacy of the Divine Law and as such could not place them above the Law. This naturally resulted in equality before law, freedom of expression, fraternity of the believers, liberty of conscience, social justice, and above all, toleration towards the members of other faiths.

In the absence of these fundamentals from the rest of the world the Muslims succeeded in maintaining their political supremacy in the then known three continents, viz., Asia, Africa, and Europe. However, by neglecting the first objective of Islamic state, namely that of promoting the cause of Islam through preaching and practice, they remained in minority in many of the areas where they ruled for centuries. But by extending not only toleration towards the members of other faiths, but by granting them most liberal treatment, they provided them with ample opportunity to strengthen themselves economically as well as culturally.

#### **Decline Sets in**

With the abolition of feudalism and despotism in Europe after the French Revolution, the way was paved for the reception of these Islamic fundamentals in Europe, and when the same treatment was meted out to the Christian subjects of the Muslim rulers by the rulers of their own religion, they naturally sided with the latter against their previous benefactors. Hence the decline of the Muslim rule set in Europe.

In the East, the Muslims came into contact with India when Sind was conquered by Muhammad b. Qasim in 711 A.D. and annexed to the Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus. The territory of Sind at that time included a large of the Punjab. Since Sind is



separated from India by the great Rajputana desert, the eastward march of the Muslims was arrested for the time being, and the Arab annexation of Sind remained an event almost isolated from the history of the rest of India.

By the tenth century A.D. Central Asia and Afghanistan had followed Persia in embracing Islam. The movement of Central Asian Muslims into India commenced towards the close of the tenth century. The Muslim Turks, Persians and Afghans who now began to pour into India brought with them a well-established religion, Islam, with its advanced and virile concepts of life and society.

In due course, the whole of India except the extreme South came under Muslim domination and began to be governed directly or indirectly by the Sultans of Delhi. Thus the Muslims became an important part of the population of India and their distinct culture was established side by side with that of the Hindus.

As a Semitic and monotheistic religion, Islam closely akin to Judaism and Christianity. The main fundamentals of Islam are that there is only one God ; that Muhammad (peace be on him) is the last of the Prophets of God and that the Quran is the revealed word of God. Islam has its own code of morality, its law and its social system. It believes in the equality of man and abhors idolatry. Hinduism, on the other hand, believes in an endless pantheon of deities, some of whom are worshipped, others propitiated. Every household has its own god or goddess. Transmission of soul is a basic tenet of Hinduism. The most important feature of Hindu social organisation is its caste system which is based on the belief that human beings are born into particular castes and that their whole life is governed by rigid rules of divine origin. The four main castes are firstly the *Brahmans*, i.e. the priests who are the equals, if not the superiors of deities ; secondly, the *Kshatriyas*, the ruling or martial class ; thirdly, *Vaisyas*, the agriculturists and traders ; and lastly, the *Sudras*, the servile class. From the orthodox point of view, all Hindus who belong to the fourth caste as well as those who profess faiths other than Hinduism are considered untouchables. Even the Muslims who were the rulers of the subcontinent were considered untouchables by the orthodox Hindus.



### Two Cultures : Two Nations

Their religious and social concepts being so radically different, Hindus and Muslims have, on the whole, always remained apart. Hinduism which interdicts inter-marriage between its own castes and even sub-caste was not expected to permit or encourage inter-marriage with Muslims. Islam too bans inter-marriage between Muslims and the followers of polytheistic creeds. The rigidity of the caste system and the serious consequences of expulsion from the caste prevented the Hindus from free intercourse with Muslims. The differences between the Hindus and Muslims persisted even in such minor matters as dress, manners of living, eating, etc., not to mention other important matters such as language and literature. In certain points, the Hindus and Muslims differed fundamentally. For instance, the Hindus are idol-worshippers whereas the Muslims are idol-breakers. The Hindus are not only vegetarians but regard cow as something sacred and worship it, whereas the Muslims eat the cow. It is for these reasons that the Qaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was merely stating an obvious fact when he stressed that:

Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million, and what is more, we are a nation with our distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions. In short, we have our own distinctive view on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation.

### Efforts at Synthesis

Many attempts were made at synthesis of the two religions and cultures, the most important being that of the Moghul Emperor Akbar (1556-1605). He experimented with a new eclectic religion called *Din-i-Elahi*, an admixture of Islam, Hinduism and other religions which, however, miserably failed to achieve any tangible results. The foolish policy of Akbar resulted in the persecution



of the Muslims and the degradation of Islam and strengthening the position of the non-Muslims, particularly of the Rajputs with whom he entered into matrimonial alliances. However, the basis of the two civilisations, the one Muslim and therefore, egalitarian and democratically oriented, the other Hindu and caste-ridden—were so basically different that they seemed destined to flow like two parallel but separate streams. It had become inevitable that the two nations should never unite.

When Aurangzeb, the great Mughul, tried to put things in their right perspective, all the anti-Muslims forces combined against him and weakened the cause of the Muslims in India. The ill-defined system of hereditary succession which was also adopted by the Moghuls, not only brought about degeneration among the successors but also wars of succession among the various competitors for the throne. The non-Muslim element, particularly the Rajputs played an important role in these wars and thus widened the gulf between the Muslim aspirants to political power.

The Muslim rulers extended the same measure of toleration to the polytheists in India which was extended, and rightly so, to the followers of revealed religions in the West. Besides, like their counter-parts in the West, Muslim rulers in India neglected the preaching of Islam and thus Muslims remained in minority even in capital cities like Delhi and Agra. The Muslims being in minority could hold their political supremacy over the majority community only by their superior ideology whose lustre blurred owing to intrusion of extraneous elements in the body-politic of Indian Islam.

The dawn of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of the process which to the end of the Moghul might in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. After the death of Aurangzeb (1707), the last of the great Moghul Emperors, the Empire entered a period of decay. The control at the centre became lax; and the decline and disintegration of the political power were accelerated. Independent principalities sprung up all over the country and began to war among themselves. The political vacuum gave rise to an era of anarchy which gave a chance to the East India Company to build up an Empire governed from abroad.



The sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah in 1739, the loss of Afghanistan and the rise of the Hindus and the Marahattas in the South seriously undermined the Mughul Emperor's position in the country.

#### **Advent and Rise of the British**

The advent of the British, who originally came to India as traders, hastened the decline of Muslim ruler in India.

The various independent warring Muslim dynasties began to approach European trading companies for help, which they did in return for far-reaching concessions and control of stretches of territory. In due course these companies became rulers over these territories and frequently at war with each other. Ultimately the British East India Company emerged as a strong power, having defeated its European rivals as well as the Muslim rulers of Bengal.

In the rich and fertile province of Bengal, the British found themselves up against the young Nawab Sirajud Dawlah who had a clear realisation of the British ambition take over Bengal in order to monopolise the rich trade there. When the Nawab resisted their mechnation, he was attacked by the British forces and defeated at Plassey in 1757.

Immediately after this, the East India Company inflicted crushing defeat on their rival European power, the French on the Coromandal coast and launched upon a campaign to crush or subjugate the various local rulers all over the sub-continent. The most formidable among these, after the death of Sirajud Dawlah was Haidar Ali who, by the year 1761, had become practically the master of the Mysore state in the South. The British formed a strong coalition with the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marahattas against Haider Ali and forced him in 1770, to pay the Marahattas a large sum of money and also cede substantial territory. This led Haidar Ali to wage a bitter war against the British until his death in 1782.

After Haider Ali's death his son, the indomitable Tipu Sultan, continued the war and carried on a ceaseless campaign against the British in order to be able to maintain independence.



The British, however, formed a triple alliance with the Nizam and the Marahattas against Tipu. And thus began the great Tipu's life long crusade against the British and their allies which ended only with his gallant death on the field of battle in 1799. Tippu's death removed the last stronghold of Muslim might on the sub-continent. Thus by the advent of the 19th century, the British supremacy on the sub-continent had become firmly established.

Since the Muslims had been the virtual rulers of the sub-continent, it was felt by the British that the Muslims and not the Hindus were their adversaries. Every action of the Muslims, therefore, was viewed with suspicion ; every effort of the Muslims to save themselves from a rapid decline was thus considered by the British a conspiracy against their interest. Under these circumstances the fiscal policy of the East India Company, which involved a deliberate extinction of the fine and more skilled arts of the country, particularly affected the Muslims. The only source of income for the better class of Muslims' posts in the army and the administration and learned professions were no longer available to them.

#### **Anti-Muslim Policy of the British**

For nearly one hundred years after the conquest of the Muslim-ruled Bengal, the East India Company in collusion with the Hindus, tried to crush the morale and to destroy the very existence of the proud Muslim community. Under the permanent Settlement Scheme most of the Muslim landholders were replaced by the Hindus. Muslims were shut out of the army and in the words of Sir William Hunter, a Bengal Civil Servant, there was scarcely a government office in Calcutta in which a Mohammadan could hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of inkpots and mender of pens. (*Indian Musalmans*, p. 167) Another contemporary English writer reports that "in the law their old training is now useless, as all Musalman polity has been done away with, so that, from having almost monopolised the posts of pleaders of the High Court even as late as 1851, we find that out of 240 natives admitted between 1852 and 1869 there was only one Musalmans". (H.C. Bowen, *Muhammadianism in India*, p. 45). Persian and Arabic were no longer taught in schools. In 1872, out of the three hundred students on the rolls



of the Hooghly College (which was maintained by the East India Company from the income of the Muslim Educational Trust) only three were Musalmans.

The following passage in Sir William Hunter's "*The Indian Musalmans*" give fuller indication of what in those days the Muslims had to suffer at the hands of the British rulers.

"There is no use shutting our ears to the charges as serious as have been brought against the Government. They accuse us of having closed every honourable walk of life to the professors of their creed. They accuse us of having brought misery into thousands of families by abolishing their law officers who gave the sanction of religion to their marriage ties. They accuse us of imperilling their souls, by denying them the means of performing their duties of their faith. Above all, they charge us with deliberate malversation of their religious foundations; with misappropriation on the largest scale of their educational funds. In a word, the Indian Musalman arraigns against the British Government for its want of sympathy, for its want of magnanimity, for the malversation of their funds, for the great public wrongs spread over a period of one hundred years"

### **The Islamic Movement**

With the loss of political power, the Muslims had fallen into a state of lethargy. The disuse of Persian as the official language and introduction of English instead had lowered the general level of culture among them. Further, the alliance of the East India Company with Ranjit Singh, which increased the aggressive power of the Sikhs in the Punjab at the same time when the Afghans were torned by internal dissensions, gave rise to a Islamic political movement which was led by Sayyid Ahmad of Bareli, who started a Holy War (*jihad*) against the Sikhs in 1826. He captured Peshawar from them in 1829 and carried on further his Holy War until 1831 when he died a martyr's death on the battle-field of Balakot in the Hazara district. His disciple Maulvi Karamat Ali of Jaunpur (d. 1873)



stirred the Muslim masses in Eastern Bengal. Even though the movement failed on the political plane, it created a tremendous awakening among the Muslims throughout the sub-continent.

Between 1833 and 1856 the British adopted a policy of large scale expansion of their territory in the sub-continent. Most of the states were annexed on the pretext of lapse as quite a number of rulers were often devoid of male heirs. By 1857 most of the country had fallen under British rule except for those Indian states which had accepted a position of vassalage. The feeling against the ascendancy of the British as a military and political power had been growing amongst the Muslims for nearly half a century. As early as 1825, the people led by Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi and his followers been agitating for an open war against the Sikh rule in the North West—a mass movement, which, according to Sir William Hunter, was “one of the greatest religious revivals known in Indian history”. Later their movement developed into a struggle against the growing menace of the British East India Company. The poor Emperor Shah Alam II, popularly known as Bahadur Shah Zafar, was too saintly a person to muster enough resources to fight effectively. But the people, including the army, continued the struggle independently which eventually led to a general war against the British in 1857, branded of the British troops as the Indian Mutiny. The timely arrival of on their way to China saved the East India Company ; and the Muslims lost their empire in India.

The same systematic persecution of Muslims as had gone in Bengal and other parts was repeated after the suppression of the Indian Munity. There were mass hangings of Muslims all over the country. Their properties were confiscated, their houses dug up in a systematic search for loot and their belongings, lands and houses were sold almost for nothing to Hindus. Muslim ruling chiefs were replaced by Hindus. Persian, which had been the court language for centuries, was replaced by English of which the Muslims were ignorant.

#### **British Patronage of Hindus**

Increasing patronage was shown to Hindus who had evinced a keen desire to collaborate with the new masters and who were consti-



considered to be of a more docile temperament than the rebellious Muslims. The Hindus who had hitherto been suffering from a sense of inferiority were now determined to gain upper hand in the life of the country, with the result that Muslims suffered the most. Their first reaction was to keep aloof and to boycott the British. To make matter worse, the British had spread a network of Christian missionaries in the country and that rightly created a sense of suspicion in the minds of the Muslim community that their policy was to convert the Muslim masses. Therefore the Muslims, led by their religious leaders, expressed their resentment against everything British, including modern education.

This was not a very happy choice as the Muslim were thus being reduced to status economically and politically inferior to that of the Hindus who had offered their cooperation to the new rulers, and who had already made a good start in learning European social and physical sciences. The Muslims had already fallen about fifty years behind the Hindus who had taken to modern education earlier and in greater numbers. The result was that the public services, commerce, the professions, politics, and in fact all walks of life, were dominated by the Hindus.

This was the situation facing Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan in 1858 and in the four decades that followed. He realised that this negative attitude would lead his people nowhere. He also realised that the British rule had come to stay for some time and that even for its sheer survival, it was necessary for the nation to equip itself with the moral and intellectual tools of the conquering civilization. His supreme effort was directed to popularise modern education among the Muslims and to give the youth of the nation the kind of training the Muslim which might enable them to take their proper and effective share in the political and economic life of the country.

#### **Role of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan**

In the beginning Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan made sincere efforts to bring about amicable relations between the various communities of India, particularly between the two major communities, viz., Hindus and Muslims. But in 1885, there came into existence a political



association which styled itself the Indian National Congress. Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan closely watched its activities for three years and found that it was not liberal enough in its outlook and objectives. He, therefore, felt reluctant to identify himself or his people with it. About this time Urdu-Hindi language controversy had taken an ugly shape and even educated Hindus were favouring Hindi on communal grounds. Differences between the Muslim and Hindu civilizations also began to impress Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan more and more as he watched the growth of political opinion in the British Indian Empire. He was the first Muslim to realise and to state that Hindus and Muslims were really two separate nations, with separate and often conflicting economic, political and cultural interests.

Sir Sayyid now devoted his whole-hearted attention towards organising the Muslims and equipping them with modern education and Islamic moral values. He urged upon the Muslim intelligentsia the necessity of taking to modern education, of catching up with the times and of adopting new ways for fighting the new menace. With this object in view, he founded the famous M.A.O. College at Aligarh where he combined modern education with Islamic teachings and created—a generation of Muslims who later on not only played a prominent role in the freedom struggle of India, but also succeeded in achieving Pakistan. This college later on developed into a full-fledged university whose products are spread throughout the length and breadth of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and are holding prominent positions in both the countries. In fact, Aligarh Muslim University is still one of the greatest centres of Islamic culture in Asia. Moreover Sir Sayyid founded the All India Muslim Educational Conference in order to accelerate the pace of education among the Muslims. He also founded the Patriotic League and set up a Muslim political organisation for the safeguards of Muslim rights.

In politics, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's objective was two-fold : firstly, to bring about a rapprochement between the Muslims and the British and, secondly, to obtain for Indians in General an increasing share in the governance of their country. He brought home to the British the real cause of Mutiny namely, the governance



of the country against the wishes of its inhabitants. He advocated the admission of Indians to the Legislative Council of India and the granting of local self-government through district boards and municipalities. He had the satisfaction of seeing both these proposals accepted.

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan was, however, keenly conscious that the Anglo-Saxon type of democratic government was not suited to the condition in India. This is what he said in a speech in the Council of the Governor General of India :

"The system of representation by election means the representation of the views and interests of the majority of the population. But, my Lord, in a country like India where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious differences are still violent, where education in the modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests in the local boards and district councils would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations.....The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community."

With a political foresight which seems the more remarkable after all these intervening years of history, he had predicted that the political destinies of Hindus and Muslims of India would be widely divergent paths. The poet Hali, his biographer, records how in 1857 some Hindus of Benaras proposed abolition of Urdu language and Persian Script in government offices as far as possible and to introduce in its place Bhasha (a Hindu dialect) to be written in the Sanskrit script. This made Sir Sayyid Ahmad realise that it was impossible for the Hindus and Muslims to become one. In this connection he frankly told Mr. Shakespeare, the Commissioner of Benaras Division :

I have now become convinced the two communities will never work together with sincereness and opposition



will appear on account of people who are called educated, and this will last. "If your prophecy is true", Shakespeare had remarked, "then I am extremely sorry." Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan replied: "I too am sorry, but I am convinced of the truth of my prophecy".

#### **Minority Representation (1861-1909).**

Between 1861 and 1905, Indians were given representation. It was, however, made clear that this did not envisage the establishment of parliamentary government on the British model. It was left that there was too great a diversity of race, religion and tradition to justify the institution of majority rule. As stated above, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan had already warned the British government of the pitfalls that lay in introducing democracy in introducing democracy in India where it could only mean the dominance of a permanent majority over the minority. The Indian Councils Act of 1866 and the local Self Government Act of 1883-84 safeguarded the interests of Muslim by the inclusion of a provision for the representation of the minorities by nomination.

Thus Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan who died in 1898 succeeded to a large measure in his life time in his mission by organising the Muslims on one platform and equipping them with modern education coupled with Islamic ideals and bringing about an approachment with the ruling nation, i. e. British, and securing from the latter certain safeguards for Muslim rights in the political field.

#### **Muslim Struggle after Sir Sayyid**

After the death of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Nawab Mohsinul Mulk and Nawab Viqarul Mulk become the guiding stars in Indian Muslim politics. The language agitation assumed serious proportions, and they expressed their resentment against the language policy. These complex circumstances intensified political consciousness among the Muslims and it was realised that a separate political organisation for the protection of Muslim interests be created. The first political and social association of the Muslims was formed at Aligarh in 1891.



In this situation the Muslim League appointed a committee to consider the future programme to be adopted. The League changed its creed and demanded self-government for India. In the midst of these events came the declaration of war against Germany. The two great representative organisations of the country, the Congress and the Muslim League were both demanding radical changes in the working of the government and evinced a keen desire to be associated with the administration of the country. The Indian National Congress was also dissatisfied with the Morley-Minto Reforms and was in a mood to join hands with the Muslims. The Muslim League held its next session at Bombay in 1915 where it had also on its platform the President of the Congress and a new spirit of co-operation was in evidence. For the first time the Muslim League took up a challenging attitude and instead of passing resolutions of loyalty to the British Government, expressed resentment against the internment of Maulana Muhammad Ali, Maulana Shauket Ali and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. It also deplored strongly the strangulation of the Muslim League news papers under the Press Act. Mr. M. A. Jinnah moved the famous resolution calling upon the All-India Muslim League to appoint a committee with a view to formulate a scheme of reforms and to authorise that committee to confer with other political organisations. For the first time also the All-India Congress Committee and the Muslim League met in Calcutta in November and again in Lucknow in December 1916 and co-jointly settled a detailed scheme of reforms as a definite step towards self-government.

#### **Lucknow Pact.**

Negotiations for a Congress-League settlement went on till 1916 when an agreed plan was evolved at Lucknow. The Congress at last recognised the Muslim demand for separate electorate. A united demand was made to the British Government for introducing elected majorities in the Council with extended powers. It was also recommended that the Viceroy should select half of his Executive Councillors from amongst the Indians. The Congress-League pact also provided safeguards for Muslims such as fixation of the number of their seats in the Council, etc.

The Congress-League Pact of 1916, popularly known as the Lucknow pact, had a far-reaching effect on the British policy. The



Government issued a declaration revising its previous attitude. Whereas formerly its stand had been that conditions in India did not warrant the introduction of representative government on the British pattern, the Montague declaration of 1917 proclaimed that the aim of British rule in India would be the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to enable the realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire, and promised substantial steps in that direction as soon as possible.

The reforms promised in the Montague Declaration of 1917 were enacted at the end of 1919 and came into operation in 1920.

These reforms established a measure of provincial autonomy by transferring authority to the provincial governments and also freeing them from the control of the Centre to a certain extent. Diarchy was established in the sphere of administration by transferring certain subjects to Indian Ministers responsible to the legislature while vital subjects such as Defence, Law and Order, Revenue and Finance reserved to the Governor and his Executive Councillors who were responsible to the Secretary of State for India and to the Parliament. The existing Central Legislative Council was reconstituted as a bicameral legislature directly elected by a non-official majority. But the Central Council continued to be entirely responsible to the Secretary of State and to the British Parliament.

#### **Non-Co-operation Movement (1919-20).**

The limited scope of the reforms was generally resented by both Hindus and Muslims. Under the leadership of Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the Congress rejected the scheme and decided to launch a non-co-operation movement in 1921. The end of the World War I, meant further disaster for Turkey and the Muslims of the sub-continent began a mass agitation on an unprecedented scale against the British Government. This coincided with the non-co-operation movement against the British launched by the Indian National Congress under the guidance of Mr. Gandhi.

The Khilafat movement, under the dynamic and inspiring leadership of Maulana Muhammad Ali became a movement of the



Muslim masses. This was to pave, in course of time, the way for the Muslim League to be a great popular organization. The imposition on Turkey of the Treaty of Sevres had created widespread unrest among the Indian Muslims who, under the leadership of the distinguished Muslim patriots, Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali, made common cause with Mr. Gandhi against the British. A combined Hindu-Muslim movement employing the Gandhian technique of non-violent resistance swept the country.

During this phase of national struggle, many Muslims proved their patriotism alongside the Congress. Thousands of Muslims courted arrest and went to jails. The Moplahs i.e. Muslim peasants of Malabar, rose in rebellion and waged a heroic struggle but were brutally suppressed. This combined Hindu-Muslim upsurge shook the foundations of British rule in India, but the unity achieved in this struggle could not be maintained because of many developments which made the Muslims suspicious of the Congress leadership. A breach in the Hindu-Muslim relations occurred once again and remained unbridged.

#### Shuddhi and Sangathan Movements.

The Shuddhi and Sangathan movements were duly organised. The aim of the former was to reduce the Muslim population by a process of reconversion and of the latter to organise a private army to exterminate the remaining population. Both movements were started by Hindu extremists and financed by Hindu capitalists. The atmosphere was further poisoned by a long series of tragic communal riots. Such riots, on a large or small scale, had been a frequent occurrence at religious festivals and observances. The feeling on the part of the Muslims that in spite of their having a distinct and advanced civilization of their own with a proud past and a bright future, they were still regarded by the Orthodox Hindus as untouchables in their country, India, where they had ruled for centuries, further widened the gulf between the two communities.

At this juncture, the Urdu and Hindu controversy further embittered feelings between the two communities. Indians had evolved a common language known as Urdu, drawing words from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit etc., but it had an Arabic script which di-



ffered fundamentally from the Sanskrit script. This was not liked by the Hindus and they wanted to replace it by the Sanskrit Script. Even the efforts of Mr. Gandhi to evolve a composite language known as Hindustani failed to satisfy the majority of the Hindus.

The abolition of the Khilafat in Turkey left the Khilafat Movement in the sub-continent without its *raison d'être*. The unnatural alliance of the Khilafat Movement with the Indian National Congress dissolved into the communal riots and political disillusionment. Muslim political leaders bitterly realised that they were being denied a square deal on the questions of representation of Muslims in the various legislatures and other elected bodies and their share in the services.

A final attempt made by convening a Unity Conference in 1924 proved a failure. In 1926 Mr. Jinnah, in his anxiety to settle the Hindu-Muslim question once and for all, sent a memorandum to Mr. Gandhi accepting joint electorates subject to certain conditions. The Memorandum was signed by 28 Muslim leaders including Dr. Ansari and Maulana Muhammad Ali. Mr. Gandhi approved of the formula and the All-India Congress Committee accepted it unanimously, but it was not proceeded with on account of Pandit Malaviya's opposition. On the other hand, the Nehru Committee, appointed by the All-Parties Conference came out with counter proposals unacceptable to the Muslim League. The National Convention of 1928 rejected all the Muslim League amendments to the Nehru Scheme and was ultimately shelved by the Congress itself. Nehru Scheme and was ultimately shelved by the Congress no wonder that even Maulana Mohammad Ali and Ex-President of the Congress and once a most devoted follower of Mr. Gandhi, declared in 1930: "We refuse to join Mr. Gandhi because his movement is not a movement for the complete independence of India but for making the 70 millions of Indian Muslims dependents on the Hindu Mahasabha."

#### **Simmon Commission (1927)**

The working of diarchy did not prove a success and as a result of pressure exercised by Indian political parties, the British Government appointed a Statutory Commission under Sir John



Simon to review the working of the Constitution and to make recommendations for further extension of reforms. The Commission was boycotted both by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League. It was at this stage that Mr. Jinnah moved his famous resolution embodying his 14 points which, in clear-cut terms, defined the safeguards necessary for the Muslim minority. The important points were as follows :

That the future Constitution should be federal with residuary powers vested in the Provinces. Sind and Baluchistan should be created separate provinces ; a uniform measure of autonomy should be granted to all Provinces, including the North West Frontier: Sind and Baluchistan : Muslim representation to the Central Legislature should not be less than one third subject to voluntary renunciation; communal representation by means of separate electorate should continue ; no Cabinet, Central or Provincial should be formed without there being a proportion of all least one third Muslim Ministers ; Muslim majorities in Bengal and the Punjab should be maintained ; and the Constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim religion and culture.

These demands show clearly that while the Muslim were pressing for an independent political existence in those areas where they are in majority, they were willing to cooperate with the Congress in the establishment of a federal centre. It is now admitted on all sides that these demands were reasonable. The Congress however, did not accept them and bitterly criticized the Muslim League. Since the entire Muslim public opinion supported Mr. Jinnah's stand, this attitude of the majority community further strained Hindu-Muslim relations.

#### **Round Table Conferences (1930)**

The Congress had fixed the 31st December 1929 as the last date for the British Government to accept the Nehru Report in its entirety. The acceptance did not come by that time and the Congress, at its Lahore session, scrapped the Nehru Report, changed its demand from Dominion Status to complete independence and decided to launch Civil Disobedience Movement.



In the meanwhile, on the report of the Simmon Commission, the Viceroy of the British Indian Empire announced on October 1930 the British Government's decision to convene a Round Table Conference in London in which the political leaders of the sub-continent were to be invited to participate. The Muslims accepted the invitation, participated in it and demanded adequate safeguards to be embodied in the Constitution. The Congress, on the other hand, did not accept the offer and therefore did not participate. They decided to launch a Civil Disobedience movement under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi in 1930. The later brushed aside the vital question of Hindu-Muslim settlement as unimportant for the moment. In the ensuing struggle the Muslims generally remained aloof. The movement therefore, fizzled the Congress, Congress agreed to try constitutional methods at the Round Table Conference which was already meeting in London.

It was about this time that the annual session of the Muslim League was held in Allahabad with the poet philosopher Dr. Muhammad Iqbal as its President, who, in his Presidential address, demanded the formation of the consolidated Muslim State in India. He said :

"The units of India compare a continent of human groups belonging to different races speaking different languages and professing different religions. The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognising the fact of communal groups. The Muslims demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore of perfectly justified. I would like to see the Punjab, N. W. F. P., Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North Western Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims. The idea need not alarm the Hindus or the British. As India is the greatest Muslim country in the world. The life of Islam as a cultural force in this country very largely depends on its centralisation in a specified territory. This centralisation of



the most living portion of the Muslims of India, whose military and political service has, notwithstanding treatment from the British, made British rule possible in this country, will eventually solve the problem of India as well as of Asia. It will intensify their sense of responsibility and deepen their patriotic feeling. Thus possessing the full opportunity of development within the body-politic of India, the North West Indian Muslims will prove the best defenders of India, against a foreign invasion, be the invasion one of ideas or of bayonets. I therefore demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of India and Islam."

Few thought at the time that Iqbal's vision would lead to the creation of the independent and sovereign state of Pakistan.

#### Government of India Act 1935

The outcome of the Conference was a substantial, if incomplete measure of agreement. The majority dissensions persisted and the British Prime-Minister had to give an Award to settle the outstanding differences. This lack of unity enabled the British Government vitiate the quality as well as the quantity of reforms. This award, known as the Communal Award was followed by the Government of India Act of 1935. The main provisions of this Act were :

1. Provincial Autonomy, i. e. freedom of the Provinces from the administrative control of the Centre, except for specific purposes.
2. Responsible Government for the Provinces subject to certain safeguards.
3. Creation of two separate provinces of Sind and Orissa.
4. Federal structure for the Central Government with the participation of the Provinces and the Indian states.
5. Separate electorate for Muslims and Statutory safeguards for minority rights.



6. Weightage to Muslims in Hindu majority provinces and to Hindus in Muslim majority provinces.

7. Nominal statutory majorities for Muslims in the majority provinces, viz., Bengal and the Punjab ; and

8. Promise of Dominion Status as the ultimate aim after the transfer of power was completed.

By this time Mr. M.A. Jinnah who had temporarily settled down in London was persuaded to return to India and take up the leadership of the Muslims. He formed a Muslim League Party in the Legislative Assembly. In April 1936, he convened a session of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay where it was decided to fight the forth-coming provincial elections. It was at this session, too, that the All India Muslim League, by virtue of the resolution adopted in respect of the introduction of provincial autonomy, constituted a Central Parliamentary Board. Next year at Lucknow, Mr. M. A. Jinnah chalked out a more constructive programme. The Muslim League decided to widen its appeal and include not only the educated few, but also the masses of Muslims by millions.

The Federal part of the Act never came into operation. The provincial part was enforced in 1936-37. The League rejected the Federal part but agreed to try the provincial part for what it was worth. The Congress rejected the entire scheme but agreed to take part in the elections, and after a period of intransigence agreed to form ministries in the provinces where it had been returned in a majority.

#### **Congress Ministries**

The Congress formed ministries in seven out of the eleven provinces of India. It rejected the League's offer of cooperation on the ground that non-Congress men could not be included in the Ministries which must be party ministries. The Muslim League was not prepared to accept this position because it meant that instead of sharing power and responsibility as partners the Muslims would be reduced to a state of subordination to the Congress High Command.

The objectives of the Congress policy at the stage were three-



fold : to strengthen the opposition to British so as to achieve complete independence; to absorb minority parties, especially the Muslim League ; and force the constitutional pace in the Indian states so that it might control the Federal Government which it was established and in which the States were represented.

The methods adopted were creating dissatisfaction in the states through the Congress organisation ; disruption of non-Congress ministries and their substitution by Congress Ministries: Muslim Mass Contact Movement, which was intended to wean Muslims away from the League; rigid control of provincial ministries by the Congress High Command. In other words, the Congress aimed at domination on an All-India basis and in a totalitarian fashion. It was financed by prominent Hindu business houses and other capitalists. It controlled all influential Indian newspapers. No opposition within the party or without was tolerated. It was, therefore, obvious that far from sharing self government with other parties, the Congressmen were determined to push democracy to its theoretically logical conclusion, to wit, majority rule, which meant in effect that Hindus who constituted the majority were to replace the British as the sole *de facto* and *de jure* rulers of the country.

### **Hindu Raj**

Side by side with these developments came another eye opener for Muslims. This was the general behaviour of the Hindu masses who began to feel that with the installation of Congress ministries, Hindu Raj had been established. Their attitude became over weaning and truculent. They tried, on the one hand, to trust the Hindu National Anthem which having an idolatrous strain, was repugnant to Muslims. On the other they tried to impose the Congress flag as the flag of the whole country. The use of Hindi was extended at the expense of Urdu. Urdu schools were either closed down or amalgamated with Hindi schools. In the Wardha Scheme of Education there was no place for the teaching of religion on the plea that it militated against the growth of a common nationhood. But literature and history to be taught in the schools were permeated with the philosophy and mythology of Hinduism and the merits and achievements of Hindu Civilization. Muslim Students had no opportunity to know about their Prophet and the heroes of Islam and the historical



achievements made by Muslims. Muslim rule in India was represented as period of strife and bloodshed without any redeeming merit. Muslim students were compelled to bow down before the portrait of Mr. Gandhi. Efforts were made to stop cow slaughter. Butchers were assulted and Muslim shops were boycotted. Muslim villagers were prevented from using village wells. Religious observances established for centuries were interfered with. There were serious riots in many towns in the Congress governed provinces where the Muslim suffered heavy loss of life and property ; and their entire economic life was paralysed. Official interference was frequent, and as a general rule, biased in favour of the Hindus. And whenever the muslims or their representative organization, the Muslim League, made any protests they were dismissed as communalist bigotry and narrow-mindedness.

#### **On the Eve of Second World War**

On the assumption of office in the Hindu majority provinces the Congress also began to indulge in provocative and disparaging utterances, denouncing the Muslim League and asserting with characteristic impetuosity that there were only two powers in the country the Congress and the British Government. Worse than this was the treatment meted out to the economic and cultural interests of the Muslims by the Congress Government. This challenge to their economic and social existence had its response in a growing political consciousness which swelled the ranks of the Muslim League, and made it, under Mr. Jinnah's determined and efficient leadership, the second largest political party in the sub continent--second only to its Hindu adversary, the Indian National Congress. From 1947, as a mass-organisation of the Muslims, the League grew from strength to strength. Its programme became revolutionary, and in 1937 the Muslim League took the momentous decision to change its aim from attaining responsible government to full independence. It also demanded abolition of landlordism.

In 1939, when the World War II began, the British Government had to review its policy towards India. To embarass the British Government the Congress decided that its ministries in various provinces should resign ; that was celebrated by the Muslims every where as a Day of Deliverance.



In September 1939, the proclamation of war was issued by the Viceroy and ratified by both Houses of the Central Legislature, the Congress members being absent. Non-Congress (Muslim) provinces also accepted the proclamation and took full part in the war effort. The Congress made its participation in the effort conditional on immediate declaration of independence and transfer of maximum power to a National Government. Mr. Jinnah offered the League's participation in the proposed Government on two conditions: firstly, categorical declaration by the British Government that it would adopt no Constitution whether for the war period only or in the final form without the previous approval of Muslim India; secondly, equal share to Muslims in the authority and control of the Government, both central and provincial, for the purpose of mobilising India's maximum war effort. The League Working Committee endorsed Mr. Jinnah's policy, and authorised him to negotiate with the Viceroy, at the same time declaring that no other member of the Working Committee should negotiate with the Congress leaders without Mr. Jinnah's permission nor should Muslims serve on War Committees without his instructions.

#### **Pakistan Demand at last**

On account of the hostile and uncompromising attitude of the Congress during the World War II, the Muslim League also had to revise and finalise its programme and aim. At last Dr. Iqbal's concept was accepted, and in 1940 the Pakistan Resolution was passed at the historic session of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore. It laid down:

“That it is the considered view of this Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North Western and Eastern



zones of India, should be grouped to constitute independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

In concrete form this Resolution meant that the Muslim majority provinces of the Punjab, Sind, the North West Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Bengal should be separated from the rest of India and grouped together as an independent state to be known as Pakistan.<sup>1</sup>

Naturally, the Congress condemned the Pakistan Resolution which, according to them, aimed at the vivisection of Mother India and according to others at cutting the cow into two halves,

#### British Offer

The political struggle in India now became a tri-cornered struggle. The Congress and the League demanded complete independence, the League demanded the establishment of Pakistan by partitioning India; the Congress opposed Pakistan and was out and out for the maintenance of India as a single country. In August 1940 was published the Declaration of the British Government known as the August Offer. It declared, *inter alia*, that the British Government could not contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be party to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a government. The League welcomed this concession to its standpoint but neither accepted nor rejected the offer as a whole. The Congress rejected the offer and in 1941 launched a non-violent *Satyagrah* movement which, however, failed.

In 1942, the threat of the Japanese invasion of Eastern India grew serious and Sir Stafford Cripps was sent to India to resolve

1. The word Pakistan was originally coined by Mr. Rahmat Ali, the Founder President of Pakistan Movement among the students studying in England. P. stands for the Punjab, A for Afghans inhabiting the N.W.F.P., K. for Kashmir, S for Sind and Tan for Baluchistan.



the political deadlock. The Cripps offer promised Dominion Status with freedom to secede ; a constitution-making body to frame the future Constitution subject to the right of provinces or states to form a separate Union ; immediate transfer to Indian hands of all subjects except Defence. This offer was rejected alike by the Congress and the Muslim League. The former did so because in the words of Mr. Gandhi, it contemplated perpetual vivesection of India ; and the latter, because, in the words of Mr. Jinnah, the principle of Pakistan which finds only veiled recognition in the document, should be conceded in unequivocal terms.

#### **Gandhi Jinnah Talks (1944) and Muslim Struggle for Pakistan**

The stalemate in Hindu Muslim relations continued till September 1944 when Mr. Gandhi invited Mr. Jinnah for talks in Bombay on the basis of self-determination for areas wishing to secede from India. Although Mr. Gandhi conceded that certain areas were eligible for self determination, he was against the principle of separation. He also pressed that foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications and Commerce should remain subjects for joint administration at the Centre. Mr. Jinnah rejected these proposals as they failed to meet the substance of the Muslim demand. No other attempt was made by the Congress to arrive at a mutually agreed solution. On the contrary, it further hardened the Muslim attitude by passing a resolution on September 5, 1945, which reiterated the Congress refusal to allow the secession of any province from the Indian Union. In July 1945 the Labour Government took Office in Great Britain. On August 15, 1945, Japan's unconditional surrender was announced and war in the East ended. Elections in India which had been postponed during war time, were held early in 1946, the Muslim League making the demand for Pakistan an election issue. The results of the election left no one in doubts as to the intensity of Muslim feeling for a separate homeland. The League won all the thirty Muslim seats in the Central Legislative Assembly and 427 out of 507 seats in the provincial legislative assemblies. Only a few Muslims were returned on the Congress ticket. And of these, some of them later joined the Muslim League. The Congress claim that it was a national body representing all Indians including the Muslims was no longer



tenable. The will of the Muslim people had been ascertained by a democratic method and their verdict was almost unanimously in favour of Pakistan. Neither the Congress nor the British Government could ignore this firm expression of Muslim opinion.

#### **Cabinet Mission, 1946**

In March 1946, the British Prime Minister sent a Mission consisting of three Cabinet Ministers with the object of promoting in conjunction with the leaders of public opinion the early realisation of self-government in India. A series of conferences were held at Simla and Delhi to evolve an agreed formula ; but in spite of protracted negotiations no Congress-League agreement was arrived at and on May 16, 1946, the Cabinet Mission announced its own plan resolving the deadlock.

The plan was divided into two parts : short-term and long-term proposals. An interim government was immediately to be established which would be completely Indian and contain an adequate representation of Muslims. The Interim government would arrange for an elected Constituent Assembly to frame the future Constitution of India on the basis of the long term proposals of the Cabinet Mission Plan. According to these proposals, India was to be constituted into three Groups, A, B and C Groups. B was to consist of the Punjab, the North West Frontier Province and Sind. Group C was to include Bengal and Assam. Group A was to contain all the remaining provinces of India. Those Groups were to frame their own Constitutions except in regard to Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications which were to be administered by the Union Centre. There was a further provision that the Provinces had the right to opt out of Groups, but only after the new Constitution had been framed and the first elections on its basis had been held.

The Muslim League accepted both the short term and long term parts of the plan ; but the Congress rejected the composition of the Central Cabinet contained in the short term proposals. With regard to the long term proposals, it declared that there were inconsistencies and discrepancies. Clarifications followed and finally the



Congress also accepted the Plan. They, however, claimed that any province or part of a Province could opt out of a Group even before the Constitution was framed. Some of their representatives even claimed that Defence and Communications which were Central subjects, also included auxiliary industries and even Customs. This would have meant entire control of the economic life of Groups B and C by the Hindu-dominated centre. The Congress, it appeared was bent upon making the Cabinet Mission Plan ineffective in all those details which were responsible for its acceptance by the Muslim League. This left the Muslim League with no option but to withdraw its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan and to revert to its original demand for an unqualified partition of India and the establishment of a separate state which would be sovereign and independent in its own right.

#### Interim Government

In the meantime the Congress had been called upon to form the Interim Government which it did in August 1946. In October, the Muslim League joined the interim government at the invitation of the Viceroy, because it felt leaving the control of the entire government machinery in the hands of the Congress would not be in the interests of Muslims and other minorities; but it firmly rejected the long term proposals as unacceptable.

The whole question of the long term proposals was referred to the British Cabinet again. It did not agree with the interpretations of the Congress and, in view of the Muslim League's categorical rejection of the Plan. Mr. Atlee, the British Prime Minister, made a statement in the House of the Common on February 20, 1947, the essential points of which were :

1. The British Government declared their firm resolve to take necessary steps to transfer power to responsible hands by the date not later than June 1948.

2. The British Government recognized that there was no prospect of any constitution being agreed to by all parties in India in accordance with the Cabinet Mission Plan.



3. The British Government declared their intention to transfer power either to one Central government or in some areas to the existing provincial Governments or in such other way as might seem most reasonable.

Towards the end of March 1947, the new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, arrived in Delhi. He was charged with the mission to settle once and for all and as expeditiously as possible the vexed question of Indian independence and to resolve the Congress-League deadlock.

Indications for the establishment of Pakistan were so strong that the Congress gave up the opposition to the idea. Instead its efforts were now concentrated on reducing the area and population which were to constitute Pakistan. Although the Punjab and Bengal were entirely homogenous units, linguistically and administratively, the Congress demanded their partition on a religious basis, i. e. combined Hindu-Sikh majority in the eastern districts of the Punjab and Hindu Majority in some Western districts of Bengal. Although this demand aimed at seriously reducing the territory, population and economic resources of Pakistan and virtually affected the interests of the prospective state, the Muslim League conceded it in order to close once for all, the long chapter of Congress League antagonism,

On June 2, 1947, the Mountbatten Plan was announced. It accepted the seven year old Muslim claim for an independent state in areas where they were in a majority, subject to the vote of the people or their elected representatives. The Muslim majority areas, viz., the whole of East Bengal the Sylhet district of Assam in Eastern India, and West Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province in North Western India declared themselves in favour of Pakistan. The non-Muslim majority districts of the Punjab and West Bengal joined the Indian Union.

The exact demarcation of boundaries was entrusted to a Boundary Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliff. Although numerical majority and contiguity were to be fundamental basis for the allocation of border areas to Pakistan and



India, large areas of the Punjab and Bengal containing Muslim majorities, and contiguous to other Muslim majority areas were given to India. Even this Award, although it was condemned by the people of Pakistan as manifestly unjust, was accepted by the Muslim League.

The unsatisfactory and unjust nature of the Award, especially so far as it applied to the Punjab, was perceived by Sir Cyril Radcliffe himself when he said in his report on the division of the Punjab. "I am conscious that there are legitimate criticisms to be made of it as there are, I think, of any other line that might be chosen".

### **The Dream Comes True**

From August 15, 1947, two independent dominions were to be set up in India to be known as India and Pakistan. For each of the new Dominions, there shall be a Governor General who shall be appointed by His Majesty for the purpose of the Dominion.

In July 1947, Mr. Atlee announced in the House of Commons that the successors to the British in India had respectively nominated Mr. Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten to be Governors General of Pakistan and India. In July 1947, the Interim Government was dissolved and provisional governments of Pakistan and India were set up.

In the Meantime, although the Congress had agreed to partition, it embarked on a systematic decimation of Muslim population by mass killing and forcible evacuation or conversion with the connivance if not with the collaboration of the forces of law and order. Trains carrying Pakistan personnel, records and furniture were attacked by armed forces of Hindu and Sikhs, Delhi, which was the seat of Muslim rule for many a century, was converted into a vast muslim refugee camp. In the riots that immediately preceded and followed partition, thousands of muslims were done to death, and thousands of woman were abducted. Muslim refugees began to pour into pakistan in thousands every day. On the pretext of shortage of wagons, pakistan was deprived of



coal, so that its transport system might be crippled. Efforts were made to prejudice the development of the port of Chittagong by diversion of Assam's tea through Calcutta. Pakistan was refused payment of the sum of Rs. 55,000,000 to which it was entitled in the hope that it would not be able to pay the salaries of its employees. A systematic effort was made to persuade the capitalist classes and trades to leave the areas of Pakistan in order to cripple Pakistan economically. The Hindus in response to the call made by the Indian Hindu patriots left the important cities of Pakistan and thus a vacuum was created. But fortunately for Pakistan, the Muslim business magnates of Bombay and Kathiawar, on account of the persecution at the hands of India and also on account of the forcible annexation of Junagarh State which had opted for Pakistan, immigrated to Pakistan and thus saved the economy of the country. A vigorous campaign was launched in India and abroad, to show that Pakistan was economically impossible and would go to pieces in a few months, if not weeks. In short, every effort was made to sabotage the establishment of the government of Pakistan.

### **Pakistan is Born**

On August 14, 1947, despite heavy odds, Pakistan came into existence amidst great rejoicings. The Muslims of India, after years of unrelenting effort had won Pakistan. Henceforth, the muslim majority provinces were free to develop politically, economically and culturally according to their conceptions as a modern democratic state imbued with Islamic spirit. For close upon a century they had been a source of raw material and a market for the manufactured goods of the rest of India. Now they were to have a balanced industrialised economy resulting in a higher standard of living for their eighty million inhabitants. The muslim genius for arts, literature and architecture, which had contributed so much to the cultural enrichment of the world in the past, had at last broken its fetters and was freed to seek new avenues of expression.

In August 1947, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah addressed the Constituent Assembly of sovereign Pakistan—a state which



he, more than anyone else, had helped to come into being. The following extracts from his address would serve to show the spirit of broad toleration and democracy in which Pakistan was inaugurated:—

“The first observation that I would like to make is this. You will no doubt agree with me that the first duty of a Government is to maintain Law and Order so that the life, property and religious beliefs of its subjects are fully protected by the State. Now if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well being of the people, and specially on the masses and the poor. If you will work in cooperation forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you can forget your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what is his colour caste or creed, is first second and last a citizen of this state with equal rights, privileges, and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.”

“You are free. You are free to go to your temples, are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in Pakistan. You can belong to any religion or caste, or creed. That has nothing to do with the business of the State.”

Thus the creation of the new State of Pakistan symbolises the hopes and aspirations of the eighty millions of its inhabitants, who, after two centuries of enslavement have at last seen the dawn of liberty. It has secured for them and for their children the right to follow their own way of life.

After the great turmoil due to fanatic religious riots resulting in kidnappings of women and children and murder of vast population on either side, Pakistan was eager to settle down peacefully and to have amicable relations with the parent State of India. But



unfortunately, the bone of contention with regard to Kashmir was left unsolved owing to the lack of foresight of Radcliff who conceded certain districts in the East Punjab, where the muslims were in majority to India and thus enabled the latter to have an access to Kashmir. India got the opportunity and is occupying Kashmir both in defiance of the resolution of U.N.O. and against the wishes of the people of Kashmir. On the pretext of the right of self determination of the people, India got Hyderabad and Junagarh State where the rulers were muslims and the majority constituted of the Hindus. On the same analogy Kashmir where the ruler is a Hindu and the majority of the population is muslim by right of self determination of the people, should come to Pakistan. However, Pakistan does not want anything but is anxious that the people of Kashmir should be conceded the right to join any state they like. But India, led by Pandit Jawarhar Lal Nehru, who is himself a Kashmiri, is afraid that if this right of self determination is conceded to Kashmiris, there is no doubt that the latter who have religious and cultural affinities with their brethren in Pakistan and also territorial contiguity with them would decide in favour of Pakistan. If this question is settled amicably, both India and Pakistan can settle down peacefully and devote the major portion of their resources, which are devoted at present to defence, to the peaceful pursuits of life.







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